

***Why Are Student Cyclists the  
Happiest Commuters? A case  
from Groningen, Netherlands***

Greta Jeruseviciute | S3339114

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. D. Ballas

Bachelor Human Geography & Urban and Regional  
Planning

University of Groningen

## **Summary**

An increasing volume of research is being conducted to understand well-being and how it can be increased to create healthier and happier societies. One particular focus is on subjective well-being and how it is affected by various policy domains such as transport. A component of subjective well-being – travel satisfaction – has been found to be affected by transport mode, with cyclists' time and again reaping highest levels of travel satisfaction. However, there has been limited research exploring reasons for such, especially qualitatively. Thus, this study aims to explore why student cyclists are the happiest commuters, taking a case from Groningen. Ten semi structured interviews were conducted online, coded and analysed in relation to existing themes. This research backed up existing theories and contributed to disproving and clearing up the importance of infrastructure for cyclist satisfaction. The main contributing factors towards satisfaction seemed to be the experiences and increased commuting control. Further investigation into the relationship through triangulation should be considered to gain a more robust understanding.

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	3
1.1 Background	3
1.2 Research Problem	5
1.3 Structure of thesis	5
<b>Theoretical Framework</b>	6
2.1 Built environment characteristics	6
2.2 Sensory	6
2.3 Affective Appraisal	7
2.4 Commuting Control	8
2.5 Mild exercise	8
2.6 Social Gains	9
2.7 Conceptual Model	10
2.8 Expectations	10
<b>3. Methodology</b>	11
<b>4. Results</b>	13
4.1 Built Environment	13
4.2 Affective Appraisal	15
4.3 Sensory	16
4.4 Commuting Control	16
4.5 Mild exercise	17
4.6 Social Gains	18
4.7 Identity	18
<b>5. Conclusions</b>	18
<b>References</b>	22
<b>Appendix</b>	26

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Over the past couple of decades, the explicit pursuit of people's well-being has been rapidly incorporated into government political agendas worldwide (Bache and Reardon, 2013). Moreover, discussions have strayed from whether the government should promote well-being and have moved towards ways it could do so (Bache and Reardon, 2013; Bache, 2013). For well-being to have a greater influence over public policy, an influx of research has been carried out to understand the relationship that well-being has with various policy domains. Recently, transport researchers have become interested in subjective well-being, exploring how it is influenced by travel and vice versa. Kitamura et. al. (1997, p. 207) claimed that "the end goal of transportation planning is after all the welfare of our residents", a notion that was re-emphasised by Ettema et. al. (2010, p. 730) who said that "the ultimate aim of transport policies is to increase individuals' well-being".

Recently, majority of studies that have linked travel to well-being have analysed peoples' travel satisfaction (i.e. satisfaction with a particular trip and satisfaction with general travel). These studies found that travel satisfaction is influenced by a range of factors such as: mode of transport, journey duration and travel-related attitudes (De Vos and Witlox, 2017). Travel satisfaction is regarded as a form of emotional well-being which is a part of the larger concept of subjective well-being (De Vos et al., 2013; Ettema et al., 2010). Diener et. al., (2000) posited that subjective well-being (SWB) is made up of four elements: the presence of positive feelings, the absence of negative feelings, domain satisfaction and overall satisfaction with life. The presence of positive and negative feelings refers to the short-term and is also known as emotional well-being. Domain satisfaction pertains to medium-term satisfaction with certain life domains (i.e. job satisfaction). Life satisfaction is a long-term evaluation of how good one's life is. Travel satisfaction is regarded as being a part of short and medium-term well-being, both of which have been found to impact life satisfaction (De Vos et al., 2013; Ettema et al., 2010).

Evidence has shown that people who experience higher levels of emotional well-being are found to be more successful within multiple life domains such as marriage, friendship, work and health (Achat et al., 2000; Lyubomirsky et. al., 2005). Moreover,

general emotional well-being may help prevent psychological distress such as depression (Achat et al., 2000) and is strongly linked to good health and longevity (Lawrence et. al., 2015). Considering the immense benefits of emotional well-being, it is of no surprise that transportation planners have investigated the relationship between it and travel behaviour.

A form of travel behaviour that has been frequently explored by researchers and which has been found to have a significant impact on travel satisfaction is transport mode. It has been frequently found that active travel commuters (i.e. cyclists and pedestrians) are the most satisfied (Wild and Woodward, 2019), even in regions with good public transport facilities and a lack of cycling infrastructure. On the other hand, motorised transport users – especially bus users – are found to be the least satisfied with their commute (De Vos et al., 2015; Morris and Guerra, 2014). In addition, it does not seem to be the case that happier people are more likely to cycle. Swapping a car or public transport for a bike to commute noticeably boosts psychological well-being (Martin et. al., 2014; Schneider and Willman, 2019). Considering that people commute on the daily, travel satisfaction is an important factor to consider for general well-being.

In Groningen, the bicycle is the most common mode of transport. A total of 61% of all trips are made by bicycle and the figure rises to over 70% when accounting for trips made to educational institutions (Zee, 2015). Residents own on average 1.4 bikes per person and for households, it is 3.1 In addition, the use of cars in the city is declining while the use of bikes is increasing (Zee, 2015). Therefore, from a policy perspective, it would be beneficial to understand what it is about cycling that prompts so many Groningen inhabitants to use it as their main mode of transport, especially in a city with such a high and diverse share of the population that cycle daily. The findings could perhaps suggest the most optimal suite of policies to implement in regions where cycling is not common that would ensure cycling to be as a pleasurable experience as it seems so in Groningen. By increasing the proportion of the population that cycles would increase levels of travel satisfaction and thus, subjective well-being of people.

## 1.2 Research Problem

Today, transport planning is still heavily dominated by ‘efficiency’ models that view travel negatively and as ‘dead time’, something that people aim to minimize (Jain and Lyons, 2008; Wild and Woodward, 2019). Yet the emergence of work in examining psychological theories such as transport experience on subjective well-being may be slowly changing that. The work, however, is described by Morris and Guerra (2014, p. 28) to be still “in its infancy” and since it has relied mainly on quantitative survey research, greater attention has been paid to motorist and public transport user experiences, mainly due to difficulties in obtaining sufficient active transport sample sizes (Legrain et al., 2015). Even the researchers that provide clear evidence that cyclists exhibit higher travel satisfaction and better mood acknowledge a lack of understanding as to the reasons behind it. In relation to this, De Vos and Witlox (2017) claimed that this gap in knowledge is due to a lack of qualitative research on the experiences of active transport users. Therefore, this paper will aim to fill that knowledge gap by exploring the experiences of Groningen cyclists, who use their bike to commute every day.

The central research question asked will therefore be: *Why are student cyclists the happiest commuters?*

## 1.3 Structure of thesis

This thesis will read as follows: First, relevant theories and themes derived from previous research will be discussed in relation to cycling satisfaction. From there, a conceptual model will be derived from which expectations for this research will be formed. In chapter three, the methodology will be presented, including data collection, analysis and ethical considerations. In chapter four, the interview results will be presented and discussed in relation to relevant theories. Similar findings will be substantiated, and any new findings highlighted. Finally, chapter five will be the conclusion, which will include the summary of the main findings, recommendations for future research and a reflection on the limitations of this research. Following will be the bibliography and the appendix, containing the interview guide, transcripts and code tree.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 Built environment characteristics

Studies have found that built environment characteristics such as land use, intersection and population densities, bike paths, and natural areas (e.g. parks, water) significantly influence one's propensity to cycle (Robertson-Wilson et al., 2008). Consequently, the same studies have also speculated that those factors would also influence cyclist satisfaction. However, in a quantitative study on exploring cyclist satisfaction, Willis et al., (2012) put those speculations to the test and found no significant relationship between built environment characteristics and heightened cyclist satisfaction. The only factors that had some effect on satisfaction were terrain slope and population density, yet they deemed their findings on the significance of built environment characteristics as inconclusive. These inconclusive findings on the relationship between the built environment and cycling satisfaction would be interesting to further explore in a qualitative setting, as built environment characteristics could be expected to influence travel satisfaction; people cycling in environments with an absence of cycling infrastructure may perceive their commute as less satisfactory.

### 2.2 Sensory

Other researchers have delved into exploring the experiences - sensory and affective - of cyclists that hold profound implications for cyclist satisfaction, and consequently why cyclists are generally more satisfied than their motorised transport counterparts (Spinney, 2009). A seemingly mundane activity like commuter cycling can be an intense, undisciplined multisensory (i.e. visual, haptic, auditory etc.) immersion that for some is too much to handle and thus, those people choose not to cycle (Jones, 2012). The sensory intensity that cyclists experience is much greater and varied than car drivers who are shielded in their vehicles from weather, noise and smells, requiring less physical effort to navigate spaces (Jones, 2012). In an ethnographic study by Jungnickel and Aldred (2014), cyclists claimed to “feel the city through smells, sights and sounds” (pg. 247). According to Willis et al., (2012), weather was the most significant determinant of cyclist satisfaction with the autumn cyclists being much happier with their commute than winter cyclists. Furthermore, Jones (2012) found cyclists to often contrast their positive intense sensory experiences to the disadvantages of being stuck in a “box” (i.e. a car). For example, both cyclists and car drivers share a sense of excitement

induced through speed yet for cyclists, speed generates a greater (multi)sensory stimulation, leaving them more satisfied (Jones, 2012).

The intense sensory immersion is a clear reason for people to choose the bicycle as a commuting mode, especially considering that some cyclists enjoy being exposed to dangerous conditions such as heavy traffic. It resonates with the concept of 'edgework' (Kidder, 2006) which can be understood as the deliberate immersion of oneself into chaotic situations that essentially allows people to test their ability to maintain control for which the reward is intense sensory stimulation (Jones, 2012). This holds implications for the significance of built environment characteristics like cycling lanes on cyclist satisfaction. Good quality, segregated lanes shield cyclists from fast moving vehicles and thus, decrease the intensity of sensory immersion. Whether that is desirable or not will depend on personal preference and ability to handle sensory stimulation. This suggests that less experienced cyclists would be more affected by the presence of cycling lanes that would make their commute more safe, calm and thus more enjoyable. Nevertheless, it is apparent that happy cyclists - at least to an extent - enjoy the higher degree of sensory arousal that cycling provides and that is essentially impossible to achieve driving in shielded vehicles.

## 2.3 Affective appraisal

Anabel and Gatersleben (2005) point to the importance of affective factors that should have a higher prominence in cycling research to gain a more holistic and realistic understanding of what mobility means to people. Affect can be understood as cognitively experienced intensities, positive or negative, through participating in an activity (Jones, 2012). Unlike emotion, affect is impossible to manifest through behaviour (e.g. anger) and can be better interpreted as a feeling. Gatersleben and Uzzel (2007) found each travel mode to elicit different affective responses; driving is relatively unpleasant and arousing (i.e. exciting), public transport is unpleasant and not arousing and cycling is both pleasant and arousing. In line with Berlyne's (1974) proposition that people strive for an optimal level of arousal, Gatersleben and Uzzel (2007) posit that cars often lead to over arousal and thus, stress and that public transport is under arousing and thus, boring. Since cycling scores positively on both arousal and pleasure (i.e. exciting and interesting), it seems to be the most optimal form of travel from an affective perspective (Gatersleben and Uzzel, 2007).



## 2.4 Commuting Control

In comparison to car drivers or bus users, cyclists often report enjoying a higher degree of commuting control that is achieved through independence, freedom and flexibility that the bicycle provides (Wild and Woodward, 2019). Independence and freedom generally refer to the perk of not having to rely on timetables and being able to choose one's own leaving and arrival times. Wild and Woodward (2019) also found interviewees to value the control over speed and not having to conform to any particular limit. In Gatersleben and Uzzel's (2007) study, flexibility was valued the most by participants such as not getting stuck in traffic jams which is one of the main stressors for car and bus users (LaJeunesse and Rodriguez, 2012). Jones (2012) claimed the bike to be a "privileged mode of transport" (pg. 827) in that it is normally allowed to go where cars are prohibited and with greater range than walking. This agility is valued by cyclists as it allows the maintenance of free-flowing, steady movement through carving out a personal route through pedestrian and vehicle designated spaces. Essentially, cyclists are able to maximize chances to maintain constant flow of movement, ensure reliable arrival times and feel a heightened sense of self-efficacy (Wild and Woodward., 2019).

The higher degree of commuting control also suggests that cyclists can mediate their exposure to various sensory intensities imposed by the environment, depending on their mood that day. For example, a cyclist can choose to cycle through a park if they want to be exposed to more nature or choose a route with a steeper hill if they want to achieve greater speed and exhilaration. Essentially, cyclists can carve out the most desirable route for themselves to make their commute as enjoyable as possible.

## 2.5 Mild exercise

In a qualitative research on e-cyclist satisfaction, Wild and Woodward (2019) found that daily opportunities to engage in mild exercise constituted a key component of cycling pleasure for the cyclist. In comparison to traditional cycling, research has shown that e-cyclists physically exert themselves less, yet they generally travel longer distances and spend more time cycling (Fyhri and Fearnley, 2015). Research has shown consistent engagement in physical activity to have profound effects on mental health, like improving self-esteem and positively enhancing mood (Pretty et al., 2007). Mild exercise has been shown to improve self-regulation of mood and is associated with the 'feel better' phenomenon of exercise

(Hsiao and Thayer, 1998). It also seems to be the most pleasurable type of exercise (Ekkekakis et al., 2011). Alongside of improving mood, mild exercise is also the best way to increase mental alertness (Lambourne and Tomporowski, 2010). In a way, the bike serves as a multifunctional tool by allowing cyclists to commute as well as exercise at the same time.

## 2.6 Social Gains

The final factor that research has shown to make cycling particularly enjoyable are the various social gains. Empirical evidence has indicated that talking to people makes travelling more pleasant and satisfactory (Ettema et al., 2012). Walking and cycling have been shown to positively affect the number of social interactions, the quality of those interactions as well as satisfaction with one's social life (van Cauwenberg et al., 2014; van den Berg et al., 2017). Aldred (2015) emphasised that cyclists in particular value the opportunities for flexible interactions, meaning they can just as easily cycle with someone or alone depending on their mood. This lends support to increased commuting control. Furthermore, participants in Wild and Woodward's (2019) study tended to portray cycling as a social activity, highlighting the perk of being able to interact with strangers on the street and that being a unique feature to cycling.

## 2.7 Conceptual Model

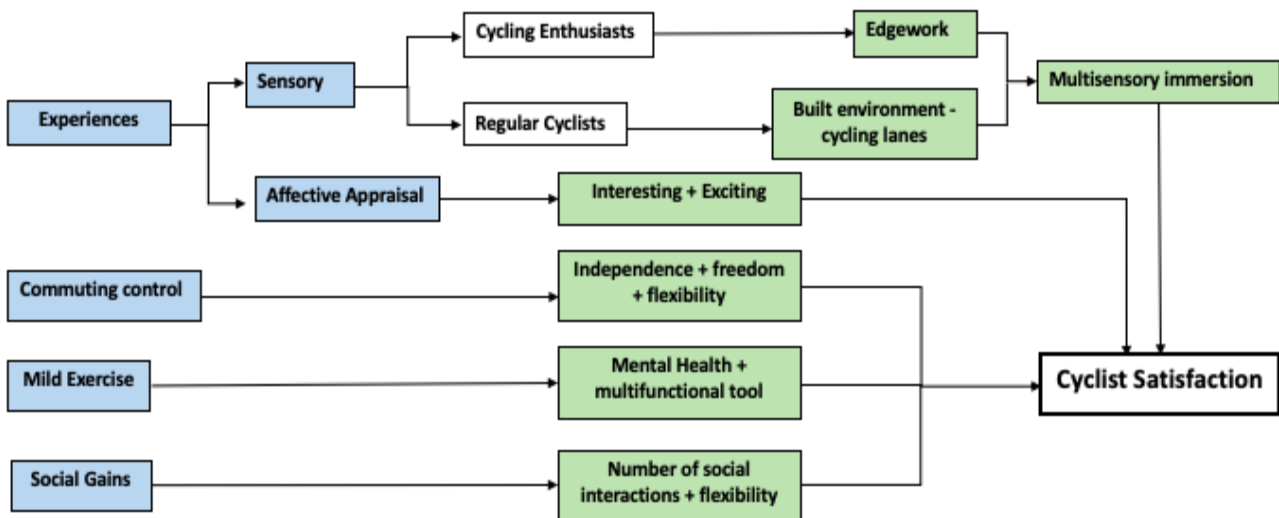


Figure 2: Conceptual Model. Blue boxes represent the main factors that have an influence on cyclist satisfaction. Green boxes represent the pathways through which the main factors influence satisfaction. Cyclist types have different multisensory immersions.

## 2.8 Expectations

Based on the culmination of existing research on cyclist satisfaction, the following could be expected:

1. Built environment characteristics such as cycling lanes will be important for regular cyclist satisfaction, rather than experienced cyclists, as they will require less intense sensory exposure.
2. A certain degree of multisensory immersion will be an important factor for all cyclist satisfaction, with warm weather being the most important factor.
3. Cycling will be deemed as the most exciting and interesting in comparison to other transport modes.
4. Independence, freedom and flexibility will be the most valued aspects of cycling.
5. The mental health benefits of consistent mild exercise will be important for the heightened cyclist satisfaction, as well as the ability to exercise and commute at the same time (i.e. multifunctionality)
6. The higher degree of social interactions, as well as the flexibility of those interactions, will be important for cyclist satisfaction.

### 3. Methodology

This is an exploratory research, aimed to increase understanding of cyclists' experiences when using a bicycle and in particular, the reasons for cyclists being the happiest commuters. For this reason, qualitative research was employed as this method is "concerned with elucidating human environments and human experiences" (Winchester and Rofe, 2016, pg.5). To gain a deeper understanding of cyclists' experiences and opinions, semi-structured interviews were carried out (Dunn, 2016) for which an interview guide was used. An interview as such "is organized around ordered yet flexible questioning" (Dunn, 2016, pg.158) which ensures that the interviews will address all relevant topics to the research question yet at the same time, allow and empower the interviewee to freely express opinions they believe to be also important on the subject matter. Should they stray, prompts from the interviewer, however, were utilised to direct the interviewees in the right direction (Dunn, 2016).

Informants were chosen purposefully, meaning those people who were able to provide insights into their experiences and opinions on the subject matter being studied were chosen (Minichiello et al. 2008). In this case, it was people who cycle to commute daily and for whom the bicycle is the best, most enjoyable transport mode. The interviewees were recruited using the snowball technique (Flowerdew and Martin, 2005) where one contact was used to recruit another contacts and so on. Once an interviewee was identified, an email or message on a social media platform was sent to them with an introduction of the interviewer, how their information was received, the purpose of the interview and other details about it such as duration of the interviews.

Initially, it was planned for the interviews to be conducted in a quiet setting like the University Library studios to minimise exposure to distractions. However, in response to the Coronavirus outbreak, measures were put in place by the national government to contain the spread of the disease. Some of those measures, such as quarantine, had impacts on the data collection and the interviews could not be conducted face - to - face as planned. Therefore, online social platforms like Facebook were utilised to identify, get into contact and interview the participants.

Ten interviews were conducted to ensure enough information was collected for analysis and they lasted approximately 20 minutes. The interviews were subsequently transcribed using *Otter.ai* and coded using *Atlas.ti*.

The interviews were analysed using the latent content analysis technique (Cope, 2016) which entailed deriving themes. This form of analysis uses codes to determine the meanings behind what the interviewees say and which in turn helped answer the research question. The interviews were analysed mainly via deductive codes that are based on the themes derived from the conceptual model. However, if information arose that had not been acknowledged in previous literature yet contributed to the answering of the research question, inductive codes were made. In such a case, new information was added to current literature.

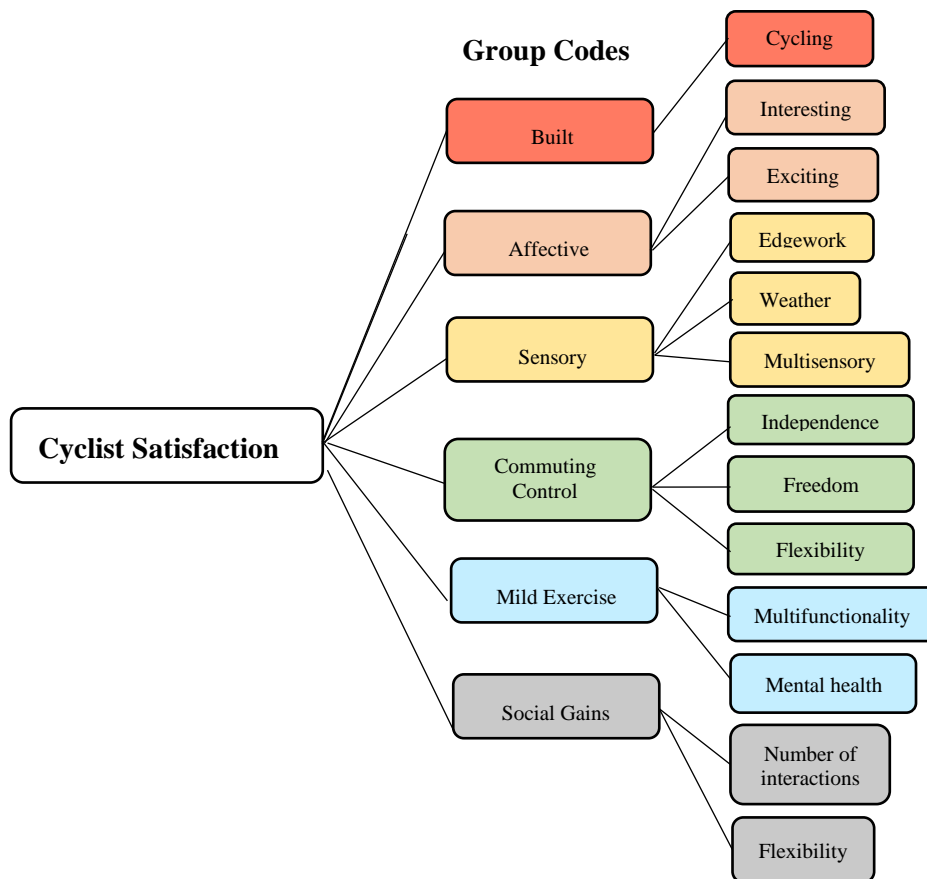


Figure 3: Coding tree. Group codes are the main categories to influence cyclist satisfaction.

This research was carried out with regard to three crucial ethical principles; justice, beneficence and autonomy (Orb et. al., 2000). Firstly, informed consent was acquired through

having each participant sign a consent form, which summarised the intention of the research and how their data was used (see appendix 2). It also made explicit that they were able to back out of the interview at any point and that their personal details remained protected to ensure privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. Even though the research topic is not particularly sensitive, it is still necessary to ensure that the interviewees are completely comfortable and feel safe.

Furthermore, in qualitative research power relations are crucial to consider as they impact the research in multiple ways (Dowling, 2016). For example, the way the researcher interprets and creates stories out of the information they are given can directly influence policy and therefore, people's lives. The interviewer and interviewee may hold different social positions and intentions. This research entered into a reciprocal relationship, where the researcher and the researched were in similar social positions and thus where power differences were minimal, although not absent (Dowling, 2016). The process of critical reflexivity was employed to address any power relations. It implies constantly reflecting on the research process and changing it when necessary, asking questions like "can this situation be improved?" and "can these actions be justified to others?". Finally, research integrity was ensured through carrying out this project with honesty and fairness, as well as maintaining a transparent research process (Dowling, 2016).

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Built Environment

As mentioned in section 2.1, previous research on exploring the relationship between built environment characteristics and cyclist satisfaction have drawn inconclusive results (Willis et al., 2012). However, considering the quantitative nature of the study it was considered necessary for a deeper exploration of that relationship in a qualitative setting. Thus, this research was approached with the assumption that built environment characteristics would act primarily as a motivator to cycle and if it had any influence on satisfaction, differences would be seen between experienced and regular cyclists (see fig. 1).

Good quality cycling infrastructure (i.e. cycling lanes, traffic lights) was a major reason for interviewees to cycle in Groningen. Infrastructure was mentioned as one of the

first reasons to choose the bike over another mode of transport by six interviewees as infrastructure was seen to make cycling the most convenient and easy way to commute. To better understand whether it also impacted cycling satisfaction, interviewees were asked to contrast cycling in Groningen to cycling back home where cycling infrastructure was less developed (if not absent). Most interviewees concluded that good quality cycling infrastructure does impact cycling enjoyability, albeit in an implicit manner. The increased feelings of safety induced through shielded cycling paths meant that cyclists in Groningen did not have to look out and worry about fast moving vehicles on the street, making their commute more relaxed and pleasant.

*“Cycling in Groningen is a lot more fun because you don’t have to fear for cars, you feel a lot safer. There tends to be less traffic lights as well so there’s more of a flow which makes it a lot more enjoyable” – Interviewee #3*

Being able to maintain a constant flow of movement was also emphasised to make commuter cycling more enjoyable which the good quality cycling lanes, traffic lights catered to cyclists and empty roads seemed to facilitate. In addition, emptier roads increased feelings of safety and allowed cyclists to ride at their desired speed which highlighted how built environment characteristics can facilitate commuting control. This suggests that built environment characteristics have an impact on specifically commuter cycling enjoyment, as most interviewees emphasised that they still enjoy cycling in itself no matter where they are.

As expected, the extent to which cycling paths had an influence on satisfaction differed between cycling enthusiasts and regular cyclists. Four of the interviewees were labelled as ‘enthusiasts’ because they all had a spare racing bike, took up cycling as a weekend hobby and even participated in cycling races. For them, good quality infrastructure was not important for cycling satisfaction and for two of them it actually decreased their cycling enjoyment as they lacked the adrenaline rush and found cycling more boring. This lends support for the concept of edgework (Kidder, 2006), suggesting that more cycling experience allows for cyclists to handle and enjoy more intense sensory stimulation.

*“There is no adrenaline rush” – Interviewee #6*

Finally, hilliness was mentioned by two interviewees as a factor to influence how difficult cycling is, lending some support to Willis et al., (2012) who found slope to be one of the most significant factors. Hilliness was often mentioned to influence propensity to cycle but it is still unclear the extent to which it influences satisfaction, perhaps due to Groningen being predominantly flat.

## 4.2 Affective Appraisal

It was expected that cycling would elicit the most optimal level of arousal and that in comparison to other transport modes, cycling would be the most interesting and exciting form of transport leading to it being the most satisfactory. Lending support to Gatersleben and Uzzel (2007), cycling was commonly referred to as being relaxing, pleasant and exciting. In comparison, taking the bus or car were often referred to as being too stressful. Riding a bike was also pointed out to be more exciting than being “stuck” inside a car, supporting Jones (2012) findings on the disadvantage of being ‘stuck in a box’.

The benefits of cycling on mental health were especially emphasized by the interviewees who commonly cited their commute as “me time”, when they were able to disconnect from their busy routines and zone out (i.e. relaxing). That form of relaxation was claimed to be impossible to achieve with a car or bus since there are too many other things to worry about such as traffic and not missing bus stops. For some interviewees, commuter cycling was seen to constitute an extremely important part of their days as it was the only real break between studying, especially for one’s with mental health issues.

In contrast to the meditative nature of cycling, five interviewees highlighted the value of the “wake up” effect of their morning commutes. It was seen especially important for early morning classes to alert their minds, something they believed would be difficult to achieve while sitting in a “warm” car or bus. This suggests that the combination of light movement and sensory stimulation (i.e. cool air) promotes an affective response (i.e. alertness). Mental health research has shown that exercise induced alertness combined with elevated levels of sensory stimulation can reduce rumination, or “persistent, recyclic, depressive thinking” (Papageorgiou and Wells, 2008, pg. 3) that can severely damage mental health (Papageorgiou and Wells, 2008). Reduced rumination with more time spent outside suggests that cyclists experience more relaxed observation and appreciation for their surroundings, or ‘commuting attunement’ (LaJeunesse and Rodriguez, 2012).



### 4.3 Sensory

It was expected that cyclists would enjoy at least a certain degree of multisensory immersion that would be nearly impossible to achieve driving in a shielded vehicle, and that weather would be the most important factor. In support of Willis et al., (2012), when asked to describe their most enjoyable commute to University, warm weather was one of the first factors mentioned and was strongly emphasised by interviewees to influence cycling enjoyment.

Multisensory experiences were particularly prevalent in the conversations regarding cyclist satisfaction. Fresh air was emphasized as an important and highly valued aspect of cycling. This emphasis placed on time spent outside and the value of fresh air is in support with findings by Wild and Woodward (2019) and is in line with ‘green exercise’ research that has exhibited how exercising in natural environment leads to mental health improvements (Rogerson et al., 2015). The experience of cycling through nature was considered by all interviewees to increase enjoyment of their commute due to being able to better observe the scenery and/or listen to animals. Smooth terrain was also mentioned by two interviewees to make their commute more enjoyable but, that was particularly emphasised by the cyclist with a racing bike which makes it more sensitive to the ground texture. This is in line with Brown (2016) who found that mountain biking on textured terrain can induce sensory and emotional experiences that increase motivation to exercise. Even though the study focused on mountain biking, it highlights the importance of haptic (i.e. bodily touch) experiences for cyclists in general.

Finally, another key experience highlighted by interviewees was the excitement and thrill generated through speed. The intense, ‘euphoric’ sensory response from cycling fast clearly indicates why people choose to cycle, as well as why they may be left so satisfied after their cycle ride. These feelings of ‘thrill’ can be inferred as the intangible, ephemeral aspects of cycling that are so important for cyclist satisfaction (Stevens, 2007).

### 4.4 Commuting Control

The expectation that flexibility, independence and freedom would be the three factors to increase commuting control and therefore, lead to increased cyclist satisfaction was

confirmed. Depending on bus schedules was seen as highly annoying and the ability to choose one's leaving and arrival times were particularly valued, especially by interviewees who struggle with time management and have a lot of places to go to during the day. Cycling was considered simpler and more efficient than other transport modes however, the short distances in Groningen played a role in that. Distance was often cited to be an important consideration for choosing a bicycle to commute with, with an average of 30 minutes being cited as a cut-off point. Considering that cyclists in general travel shorter distances than car or bus drivers (Gatersleben and Uzzell, 2007), it would be a logical reason for their increased satisfaction. The ability to control one's own time, speed and route were perceived to make commuting more exciting and seemingly faster which highlights how increased commuting control can also induce positive affective responses.

*"I'm not good at being on time so if I had to rely on a bus or something, I would often be late"*  
- Interviewee #9

Moreover, in support of Jones (2012) many interviewees also enjoyed how agile cycling is. It supports the notion of the bike being a 'privileged' transport mode (Jones, 2012), allowing one to carve out a route day by day depending on what is personally desirable and thus, making the commute most satisfactory. For example, interviewees often stated that given they were not in a rush, they would choose a more scenic route rather than one that is fastest but goes through the city centre. Or another interviewee claimed that if he was feeling it, he would race someone by the traffic lights. These things are a lot more difficult, if not impossible to do with a car or bus, emphasising their more constraining nature.

## 4.5 Mild exercise

It was expected that cyclists would enjoy the various mental health benefits of engaging in mild exercise as well as appreciate the multifunctional aspect of commuter cycling. Consistent with findings by Wild and Woodward (2019), being able to move the body was a highly valued aspect of cycling. Interviewees felt like the light movement helped with mood improvements and regulating mental health, lending support for Pretty et al., (2007) and Lambourne and Tomporowski (2010). Moreover, the bike was seen as a great way to maintain fitness levels especially since finding time to dedicate to the gym was seen

by some as challenging. It supports the notion of the bicycle being a multifunctional tool, rather than simply a transport to get from point A to point B.

## 4.6 Social Gains

It was expected that larger opportunities to socialise and their flexibility would make cyclists more satisfied than their motorised transport counterparts. However, unlike Wild and Woodward's (2019) findings, socialising was not particularly valued by interviewees and if anything, cycling alone was preferred. As mentioned in section 4.2, commuter cycling for most is 'me time', a time to relax and meditate. As highlighted by some, University students are constantly seeing people so cycling is sometimes the only time they can be alone. Moreover, one interviewee actually claimed that socialising is easier to do in a car which contradicts van Cauwenberg et al., (2014) and van den Berg et al., (2017) who deem cycling to reap the highest level of quality social interactions.

However, in line with Aldred (2015) who defined cycling as a mode that allows people to balance their need for social interaction with autonomy (i.e. flexibility), interviewees cited the ease with which that can be done as a perk of cycling.

## 4.7 Identity

Finally, it became apparent that most participants readily identified themselves as 'cyclists' and one even termed cycling as an 'ideology'. Increased satisfaction may arise from engaging in an activity that one deems fitting in with personal values or that is socially acceptable. For example, some interviewees identified as 'environmentalists' for whom cycling induced the feel better effect of contributing positively towards the environment. Moreover, the strong bicycle culture in Groningen was for some an important aspect of cycling satisfaction as induced feelings of belonging and shared identity. It relates to the work on the power of social comparisons by Abou-Zeid and Ben-Akiva (2011) that found positive comparisons to increase commute satisfaction and especially, when others travel with the same mode.

## 5. Conclusions

This research explored various themes derived from previous literature on cyclist satisfaction, including the inconclusive findings of built environment characteristics since the relationship has only been explored in a quantitative setting.

Infrastructure had some influence on satisfaction through facilitating constant flow of movement and increasing feelings of safety. However, for cycling enthusiasts it was not important and for some even made cycling more boring. It highlights the importance to differentiate cyclists by type. It is important to note, however, that cycling in general was deemed enjoyable regardless of infrastructure quality yet specifically for commuting, infrastructure does seem to enhance satisfaction through allowing cyclists to relax and move as efficiently as possible. Still, even more important for cyclist satisfaction seem to be the intangible benefits and experiences that cycling induces.

The multisensory immersion that cyclists experience seems to be the major reason for increased cyclist satisfaction, followed by increased commuting control and positive affective responses. In line with previous research, weather was the most important factor for cyclist satisfaction as well as the heightened engagement of various senses like auditory, kinaesthetic, haptic and visual. Increased commuting control essentially provides cyclists with the ability to carve out a route and style of commuting depending on their mood, highlighting the 'privilege' of the bicycle. Cycling is not as constraining as a car or bus and faster than walking. Finally, cycling in general was perceived to be the most relaxing and interesting way to commute since cyclists do not have to worry about getting stuck in traffic and have higher commuting attunement.

Interestingly, identity inductively appeared as a theme to influence cyclist satisfaction in part, through participating in an activity that aligns with one's values and thus, generating a feel better effect. The strong bicycle culture in Groningen also increased satisfaction through inducing feelings of belonging and making cycling more enjoyable in unfavourable conditions like bad weather, simply because everyone is doing it (i.e. positive social comparisons). The bicycle culture is a strong motivator for people to cycle but is also one way through which people learn to overcome uncomfortable environments and learn to eventually love cycling, especially those who are apprehensive at first. Cities around the Netherlands even have cycling coaches to help newcomers or anyone who is nervous about riding a bike overcome their fear (Staples, 2020). Such services combined with appropriate infrastructure could be extremely useful in more places around the world to promote cycling and make it more enjoyable at least for the part of the population more concerned with safety.

It is important to highlight the mental health benefits derived from cycling, especially considering that mental health problems amongst students are on the rise (Storrie et al., 2010). This has important policy implications for promoting cycling as a main transport mode in more student dominated cities, as it could substantially aid in stress reduction and improve mindfulness.

It is apparent that cycling is more than just a healthy habit or simply an environmentally friendly mode of transport. When promoting cycling as a legitimate transport mode in cities, a deeper appreciation and acknowledgment towards the psychological, social and physical benefits should be considered, as well as the way that cycling can improve the liveability and quality of life of urban environments. After all, liveable cities are happier cities. Furthermore, this research calls for urban planners to move beyond focusing on primarily creating safe infrastructure to consider the variety of experiences that are arguably more important for cyclist satisfaction. This could, for example, encompass planting a variety of plants along cycling path networks to increase exposure to pleasant scenery. It could also mean providing a level of visual detail that could be easily perceived from the speed of a bike (Forsyth and Krizek, 2011).

## 5.1 Limitations

It should be emphasised that these findings pertain to the international student population of Groningen specifically and are not representative of the entire student population, especially beyond Groningen. The validity of these findings could be substantiated through triangulation like combining surveys with interview data, as well as sampling a larger variety of demographics. The main difficulty was differentiating between solely motivations to cycle and factors that increase cyclist satisfaction. Sometimes the motivations to use a bicycle were also what made cycling enjoyable, but not always. Future research should place more attention on examining the relationship between decision and experienced utility, such as how to design questions that accurately reflect their difference.

Conducting these interviews also challenged my personal interviewing skills and highlighted my weak spots. Even though I had conducted multiple interviews for research before, it was still a challenge at times to pick up and follow up on important information that the interviewees gave. Luckily, one practice interview was conducted that not only helped me gain confidence but also highlighted questions that had to be adjusted and/or changed

completely. It was particularly challenging to maintain a constant flow of conversation with the interviewees who tended to give one worded (or extremely short) answers however, it got easier with every interviewee and helped improve my interviewing skills in general.

## References

- Abou-Zeid, M. and Ben-Akiva, M., 2011. The effect of social comparisons on commute well-being. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 45(4), pp.345-361.
- Achat, H., Kawachi, I., Spiro, A., DeMolles, D. and Sparrow, D. (2000). Optimism and depression as predictors of physical and mental health functioning: The normative aging study. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 22(2), pp.127-130.
- Aldred, R., 2010. 'On the outside': constructing cycling citizenship. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 11(1), pp.35-52.
- Aldred, R., 2015. A Matter of Utility? Rationalising Cycling, Cycling Rationalities. *Mobilities*, 10(5), pp.686-705.
- Anable, J., and Gatersleben, B. (2005). All work and no play? The work of instrumental and affective factors in work and leisure journeys by different travel modes. *Transportation Research Part A* 39(2-3), pp. 163-181
- Bache, I. (2013). Measuring quality of life for public policy: an idea whose time has come? Agenda-setting dynamics in the European Union. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 20(1), pp.21-38.
- Bache, I. and Reardon, L. (2013). An Idea Whose Time has Come? Explaining the Rise of Well-Being in British Politics. *Political Studies*, 61(4), pp.898-914.
- Berlyne, D. E. (1974). *Studies in the new experimental aesthetics: Steps toward an objective psychology of aesthetic appreciation*. New York: Halstead.
- Brown, K., 2016. The haptic pleasures of ground-feel: The role of textured terrain in motivating regular exercise. *Health & Place*, 46, pp.307-314.
- Caldwell, K. and Boyer, R., 2018. Bicycle commuting in an automobile-dominated city: how individuals become and remain bike commuters in Charlotte, North Carolina. *Transportation*, 46(5), pp.1785-1806.
- Castelfranchi, (2018). 'Affective Appraisals versus Cognitive Evaluation in Social Emotions and Interactions', in Paiva (Ed.). *Affective Interactions, Towards a New Generation of Computer Interfaces*. Lisboa: Springer, pp. 76 – 106
- Cope, M., (2016). Organizing and Analysing Qualitative Data. In Hay, I., (4th Ed.), *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography* (373 – 392). Ontario, Oxford University Press
- De Vos, J. and Witlox, F. (2017). Travel satisfaction revisited. On the pivotal role of travel satisfaction in conceptualising a travel behaviour process. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 106, pp.364-373.
- De Vos, J., Mokhtarian, P., Schwanen, T., Van Acker, V. and Witlox, F., 2015. Travel mode choice and travel satisfaction: bridging the gap between decision utility and experienced utility. *Transportation*, 43(5), pp.771-796.
- De Vos, J., Schwanen, T., Van Acker, V. and Witlox, F. (2013). Travel and Subjective Well-Being: A Focus on Findings, Methods and Future Research Needs. *Transport Reviews*, 33(4), pp.421-442.

- Diener, E. (2000). Subjective well-being: The science of happiness and a proposal for a national index. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), pp.34-43.
- Dowling, R., (2016). Power, Subjectivity and Ethics in Qualitative Research. In Hay, I., (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.) *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography* (29 - 43). Ontario, Oxford University Press
- Dunn, K., (2016). “Doing” Qualitative Research in Human Geography. In Hay, I., (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.), *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography* (149 - 188). Ontario, Oxford University Press
- Ekkekakis, P., Parfitt, G. and Petruzzello, S., 2011. The Pleasure and Displeasure People Feel When they Exercise at Different Intensities. *Sports Medicine*, 41(8), pp.641-671.
- Ettema, D., Gärling, T., Eriksson, L., Friman, M., Olsson, L. and Fujii, S. (2012). Satisfaction with travel and subjective well-being: Development and test of a measurement tool. *Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour*, 14(3), pp.167-175.
- Ettema, D., Gärling, T., Olsson, L. and Friman, M. (2010). Out-of-home activities, daily travel, and subjective well-being. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 44(9), pp.723-732.
- Flowerdew, R. and Martin, D. (2005). *Methods in human geography*. 2nd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis.
- Flowerdew, R. and Martin, D. (2005). *Methods in human geography*. 2nd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis.
- Forsyth, A. and Krizek, K., 2011. Urban Design: Is there a Distinctive View from the Bicycle?. *Journal of Urban Design*, 16(4), pp.531-549.
- Fyhri, A. and Fearnley, N., 2015. Effects of e-bikes on bicycle use and mode share. *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment*, 36, pp.45-52.
- Gatersleben, B. and Uzzell, D., 2007. Affective Appraisals of the Daily Commute. *Environment and Behavior*, 39(3), pp.416-431.
- Goring, H. and Papageorgiou, C., 2008. Rumination and Worry: Factor Analysis of Self-Report Measures in Depressed Participants. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 32(4), pp.554-566.
- Hsiao, E. and Thayer, R., 1998. Exercising for mood regulation: The importance of experience. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 24(6), pp.829-836.
- Jain, J. and Lyons, G. (2008). The gift of travel time. *Journal of Transport Geography*, 16(2), pp.81-89.
- Jones, P., 2006. Performing the city: a body and a bicycle take on Birmingham, UK. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 6(6), pp.813-830.
- Jones, P., 2012. Sensory indiscipline and affect: a study of commuter cycling. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 13(6), pp.645-658.
- Jungnickel, K. and Aldred, R., 2014. Cycling’s Sensory Strategies: How Cyclists Mediate their Exposure to the Urban Environment. *Mobilities*, 9(2), pp.238-255.
- Kidder, J., 2006. “It’s the Job that I Love”: Bike Messengers and Edgework. *Sociological Forum*, 21(1), pp.31-54.



Kitamura, R., Fujii, S. and Pas, E. (1997). Time-use data, analysis and modeling: toward the next generation of transportation planning methodologies. *Transport Policy*, 4(4), pp.225-235.

LaJeunesse, S. and Rodríguez, D., 2012. Mindfulness, time affluence, and journey-based affect: Exploring relationships. *Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour*, 15(2), pp.196-205.

Lambourne, K. and Tomporowski, P., 2010. The effect of exercise-induced arousal on cognitive task performance: A meta-regression analysis. *Brain Research*, 1341, pp.12-24.

Lawrence, E., Rogers, R. and Wadsworth, T. (2015). Happiness and longevity in the United States. *Social Science & Medicine*, 145, pp.115-119.

Legrain, A., Eluru, N. and El-Geneidy, A. (2015). Am stressed, must travel: The relationship between mode choice and commuting stress. *Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour*, 34, pp.141-151.

Lyubomirsky, S., King, L. and Diener, E. (2005). The Benefits of Frequent Positive Affect: Does Happiness Lead to Success?. *Psychological Bulletin*, 131(6), pp.803-855.

Martin, A., Goryakin, Y. and Suhrcke, M. (2014). Does active commuting improve psychological wellbeing? Longitudinal evidence from eighteen waves of the British Household Panel Survey. *Preventive Medicine*, 69, pp.296-303.

Minichiello, V., Aroni, R. and Hays, T., 2008. *In-Depth Interviewing*. Sydney: Pearson Education Australia.

Minichiello, V., Aroni, R. and Hays, T., 2008. *In-Depth Interviewing*. Sydney: Pearson Education Australia.

Morris, E. and Guerra, E. (2014). Mood and mode: does how we travel affect how we feel?. *Transportation*, 42(1), pp.25-43.

Ogilvie, D., Mitchell, R., Mutrie, N., Petticrew, M. and Platt, S., 2008. Personal and environmental correlates of active travel and physical activity in a deprived urban population. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 5(1), p.43.

Orb, A., Eisenhauer, L. and Wynaden, D. (2000). Ethics in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 33(1), pp.93-96.

Paige Willis, D., Manaugh, K. and El-Geneidy, A., 2012. Uniquely satisfied: Exploring cyclist satisfaction. *Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour*, 18, pp.136-147.

Pretty, J., Peacock, J., Hine, R., Sellens, M., South, N. and Griffin, M., 2007. Green exercise in the UK countryside: Effects on health and psychological well-being, and implications for policy and planning. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 50(2), pp.211-231.

Robertson-Wilson, J., Leatherdale, S. and Wong, S., 2008. Social–Ecological Correlates of Active Commuting to School Among High School Students. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 42(5), pp.486-495.

Rogerson, M., Brown, D., Sandercock, G., Wooller, J. and Barton, J., 2015. A comparison of four typical green exercise environments and prediction of psychological health outcomes. *Perspectives in Public Health*, 136(3), pp.171-180.

Schneider, R. and Willman, J. (2019). Move closer and get active: How to make urban university commutes more satisfying. *Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour*, 60, pp.462-473.

Spinney, J., 2009. Cycling the City: Movement, Meaning and Method. *Geography Compass*, 3(2), pp.817-835.

Staples, H., 2020. *Holland-Cycling.Com - Cycling Lessons*. Holland-cycling.com.

Stevens, Q. (2007). *The Ludic City: Exploring the potential of public spaces*. Oxon, UK: Routledge.

Storrie, K., Ahern, K. and Tuckett, A., 2010. A systematic review: Students with mental health problems-A growing problem. *International Journal of Nursing Practice*, 16(1), pp.1-6.

van Cauwenberg, J., De Donder, L., Clarys, P., De Bourdeaudhuij, I., Buffel, T., De Witte, N., Dury, S., Verté, D. and Deforche, B., 2014. Relationships between the perceived neighborhood social environment and walking for transportation among older adults. *Social Science & Medicine*, 104, pp.23-30.

van den Berg, P., Sharmeen, F. and Weijs-Perrée, M., 2017. On the subjective quality of social Interactions: Influence of neighborhood walkability, social cohesion and mobility choices. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 106, pp.309-319.

Wild, K. and Woodward, A., 2019. Why are cyclists the happiest commuters? Health, pleasure and the e-bike. *Journal of Transport & Health*, 14, p.100569.

Winchester, H., and Rofe, M., (2016). Qualitative Research and Its Place in Human Geography. In Hay, I., (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.), *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography* (3 – 27). Ontario, Oxford University Press

Zee, R. (2015). *How Groningen invented a cycling template for cities all over the world*. [online] the Guardian.

## Appendix

### 1. Interview Guide

Hi, thank you for being here and agreeing to participate in this interview. The topic of our conversation will be cycling, and I want to get to know your experience and opinions on it, so this will be more like a conversation rather than interrogation between us. So, feel free to express your opinions freely and openly. If you don't understand a question don't hesitate to say and I will rephrase it. Let's begin with the first question:

1. For what purpose do you normally use your bike for?
  - a. Why not use a car or another mode of transport?
2. Do you cycle (to commute) anywhere else apart from Groningen?
  - a. Just in Groningen → how come?
  - b. Back home as well → how come?
3. What aspect of riding your bike do you enjoy the most
  - a. Do you ever take specific routes to increase the enjoyment of your ride? For example: greenery, less people, better infrastructure...
  - b. Do you prefer to cycle alone or with friends?
  - c. It is a pleasant activity?
  - d. Safety
  - e. Culture
  - f. Accidents
4. Could you describe your perfect cycle commute to university?
5. What do you look forward to the most when you set off in your commute?
6. Would you identify as a cyclist?
7. What is the main thing about cycling to commute you prefer over taking car/bus?
8. What aspect of cycling do you like the least? What makes your cycling trip stressful/unenjoyable?
9. Do you think cycling daily has an impact on your fitness?
  - a. Yes → do you enjoy the exercise aspect of it?
  - b. No → Why not? Too moderate
10. Will you continue cycling (to commute) when you leave Groningen?

## 2. Consent form



university of  
 groningen

faculty of spatial sciences

### Consent form for the research project

*Why are cyclists the happiest commuters?*

I have read the information about the research project. I was able to ask questions and my questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I had enough time to decide to participate in the research.

My participation is completely voluntary.

I can withdraw from the research at any time, without having to give a reason.

I give my permission for using the interview data for the following purposes (e.g. scientific article and presentations and or educational purposes).

I give my permission to record the interview for research purposes.

### I agree to participate in this interview.

Name and signature of research participant.

Date.

Please include your email address if you would like to be sent the final research project

Email Address:

-----  
----

I declare that I have informed the research participant about the research.

I will notify the participant about matters that could influence his/her participation in the research.

Name and signature of researcher.

Date.

## 1. Transcripts

### Coding key

	Important (random) quotes
	Identity
	Built environment
	Affective appraisal
	Sensory
	Commuting control
	Exercise
	Socialising

#### Interviewee #1: Regular Cyclist

##### **Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:02

Hi, thank you for being here and agreeing to participate in this interview, the topic of our conversation will be cycling. And I want to get to know your experience and your opinions on it. So this will be more like a conversation between us. So feel free to express your opinions and whatever comes to mind freely, it's not an interrogation. And if you don't understand a question, just let me know and I will clear it up for you. So let's begin with the first question. For what purpose do you normally use your bike for?

##### **Interviewee** 00:44

To get to school, do groceries, get to work or just leisure, I like to bike around the lake in Groningen or just to clear my head. So basically, just whenever I leave the house, I'm most likely going to use my bike.

##### **Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:00

So you use your bike for pretty much everything.

##### **Interviewee** 01:02

Yes.

##### **Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:04

And why not use a car or in other motor transport? This is more specifically to commute.

##### **Interviewee** 01:18

I don't have a driver's licence nor a car. But also Groningen is not a car friendly city. And the bus, it takes a while to get to the bus stop from my place and you have to pay for the bus and then you have to wait for it so I don't like to depend on it because if it's late or something breaks then I cannot get somewhere on time. I don't like that. I love being always punctual so with my bike I feel more free and flexible and independent.

##### **Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:44

Okay. So you have that like arrival time reliability, basically.

**Interviewee** 01:49

Yes. It's like if I mess something up, it's on me and that's okay. I can own up to it instead of you know say "Oh, I'm sorry, my bus was late or this and that happened". → Take responsibility

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:01

Let's say you did have a driver's licence, do you think you would prefer to drive in Groningen?

**Interviewee** 02:13

I don't think so. I think it's more stressful. And again with a bike, I'm not super like eco friendly, like I'm not a crazy freak about sustainability, but I do care about it still. So I think if there's a way to bike and get somewhere like that, and yeah, what's the word...I think it's cheaper, sustainable, and I like being outside and fresh air. → Car is too stressful (affective), personal values, fresh air (sensory)

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:38

So cheaper sustainability, clean air... okay. Um out of interest do you cycle to commute mostly anywhere else apart from Groningen? So for example, when you're back home...

**Interviewee** 02:54

I mean, I don't go back home really to Poland often or never really. But when I'm here in Germany, I take my boyfriend's mom or whoever's bike around the lakes as well or mountains. So, yeah, it's whenever I can, I would like to use a bike.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:12

Okay. So you don't really commute anywhere else apart from Groningen?

**Interviewee** 03:17

No. mostly there all the time.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:19

Let's say you move to Germany or back to Poland. Do you think you would use your bike to commute there?

**Interviewee** 03:26

Yes, if that was possible, I mean, I come from Warsaw, it's a very big city. So to bike somewhere could possibly take me one hour or more, and I think that will not be feasible. So in that case, I would probably prefer a public transport. But if I were to move to a bit smaller city or one that's for bike friendly, then I would definitely choose biking.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:46

Okay, does infrastructure have a large role to play in your enjoyment of cycling?

**Interviewee** 03:55

Definitely, like, what I have somewhere where the road is pretty clean and not too hilly, then it's definitely more enjoyable than biking through the bricks that are uneven, with like many

hills or I don't know, sand or something. So when the city's more adjusted to it, and I enjoy it more. → cleanliness, hills, terrain texture

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 04:16

And what about like safety? Does that have a big influence on not even just if you're going to cycle but also how much you enjoy the activity?

**Interviewee** 04:30

Yeah, I mean, I mostly cycle in Groningen, as I said, so it's pretty safe there since the drivers are more used to having bikes around, as opposed to, let's say, Warsaw where it's pretty dangerous cycle, because drivers don't care about cyclists. And there's not one lane for them, but they tend to go around the cars which again, isn't safe. So I think people's mentality and also how infrastructure is adjusted. So there are bike lanes that are clear and not taken by cars and definitely make a big impact both on their if I cycle and how good I feel while cycling. → Cycling culture so bikes are looked out for and taken seriously + cycling lanes so overall feelings of safety increased = more enjoyable

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:05

Okay. Um, so what aspects of riding your bike to enjoy the most in Groningen?

**Interviewee** 05:15

I would say freedom. That's the one thing that I really enjoy. It's good for your body, at least if I don't work out because I rarely do then I can get some type of activity. And I think it connects people to some extent. Because if you live in a city where everyone basically bikes is kind of a common thing to get to share with people. So I also enjoy that. → cycling culture connects people, feelings of belonging...

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:42

So the strong bicycle culture that is present in Groningen, do you think that influences your enjoyment of cycling?

**Interviewee** 05:52

I think so. I think it's nice sometimes when I would cycle to some smaller villages around or just go on bike tours. And there were a few people, usually they would always wave and say hi, or just nod their heads, I think that's like a, then you become part of a community. Even if you don't know each other, you can still nod and say hi. And they won't think you're an idiot, or like sort of weird, but it's just kind of like an unspoken rule, I think → sense of community; random interactions with strangers possible (not when you're shielded in a vehicle though)

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:17

So do you enjoy that aspect of sociability that you can gain from cycling?

**Interviewee** 06:22

I think so. Yeah, I would say so.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:23

Do you ever cycle with other people? Like do you enjoy that as well? Or do you prefer to go by yourself.

**Interviewee** 06:30

Not always since I'm a fast cyclist, like I get the let's say thrill or whatever from biking fast and taking over people and the ones I cycle with don't keep up so I always need to slow down a bit and make sure that they're not in the back. But if I were to go on a bike tours around the lake, the haunted Mayor or just in some small villages that I like to be with other people as well as my mood. → thrill from cycling fast (sensory) + opportunities for flexible interactions are valued

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:57

When you cycle to commute, do you ever take specific routes to increase your enjoyment of cycling?

**Interviewee** 07:15

Oh yeah, I would say overall, I tend to look at the shortest way to get somewhere. And of course, if I don't have much time, then I will just take the shortest way regardless if it's comfortable or not, but most times if I have the time, I can take more time to get somewhere and I live by the park. So I always bike past there and I think that makes it a little better than when we lived in Upsilon and there wasn't too much greenery around.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:41

Yeah. So scenery does influence your enjoyment of the cycle?

**Interviewee** 07:47

Yes.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:47

Okay. And out of interest, what aspects of cycling would you say you like the least?

**Interviewee** 07:53

Oh, I think the weather conditions because when you're in a car it doesn't matter as much, but cycling, if it's windy if it's raining or snowing that always affects it. And then you have to dress warm for the weather but after you are done biking you get really sweaty. And that's the thing what I enjoyed the least, that I arrive somewhere looking pretty, and then I end up being sweaty with, I don't know, sweaty makeup.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 08:25

But bad weather, or let's say you're late and you know you're gonna have to cycle fast and get sweaty... Does that ever prevent you from cycling?

**Interviewee** 08:36

Actually, no, I know I have to do it because it's the only way. Even if I could choose the bus, I would still choose biking. Like I work outside the city, and I have to get past two big bridges to get there. And I always get sweaty, regardless of the weather basically, but I still choose it even though I could choose the bus, it takes a bit more time and I think It's a sacrifice I'm willing to make.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 09:02

Okay. If you could describe your perfect cycle trip to uni, what would it entail? Like your most enjoyable cycling trip.



**Interviewee** 09:17

I would say about 15 to 18 degrees, sunny um, a little bit of wind for the cool breeze, not too many bikes but it doesn't have to be empty and preferably some dogs running around. → weather, bike density, animals

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 09:39

And what do you look forward to the most when you're going to cycle to uni?

**Interviewee** 09:45

It may sound weird, but whenever I cycle the Zernike route by the park, I just love being fast, because there's no cars there and there's no stoplights. So I can just bike and every time I see someone I can overtake them. And I just like the thrill of getting to uni as fast as possible.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 10:17

So you enjoy the exhilaration and the speed that a bike can give?

**Interviewee** 10:23

Yeah, like the route is usually eight to 10 minutes and if I can get there in six or seven, I enjoy that.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 10:30

Okay, and what is like the one thing that would annoy you the most or disturb you the most during your commute?

**Interviewee** 10:38

People who do not abide by the rules, who bike on the left lane and then turn right or don't use their hands when this signals if they're turning, or just slow people who bike in the middle and you can't overtake them. → safety is important; cyclists are not shielded in vehicles, body much closer to the environment so consequences of crashing are larger

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 10:52

So other cyclists essentially.

**Interviewee** 10:55

Other cyclists, yeah, who don't abide by the rules.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 11:01

What is in your opinion the one thing that you think is a lot more enjoyable and better about cycling to commute rather than taking the car to commute?

**Interviewee** 11:13

*I think you get to enjoy the surroundings more, at least for me, even though you bike and you still rather fast compared to walking, but I think you still get to enjoy the surroundings more and notice I don't know stores or people or animals around you so I just think it's being more mindful of your surroundings.*

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 11:36

And do you have time for anything else? To like think about your day or...

**Interviewee** 12:00

Yes. Well I have my mental issues so whenever I bike it can be really helpful. So whenever I feel down I tend to just get on the bike put headphones in and bike without direction. Just find myself going whenever I feel like it wherever and it gives me this freedom and also that said if you cry on the bike people don't see it because when you walk, so that also works. I think it helps me clear my mind and focus on something bigger than just myself. But again, the surroundings I don't know the water the people...

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 12:33

Okay. You can take in your environment a lot better that way.

**Interviewee** 12:36

Yes.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 12:38

And what is your opinion on the one thing that is better about cycling than taking the bus for example, if it's a different thing?

**Interviewee** 12:54

I mean, it's like about again being independent off the bus schedule or other circumstances, but also, you don't have to deal with people. You're more independent on your bike, even if you're in a line of bikes than when you're in a bus. → [Social overstimulation?](#)

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:14

Would you identify yourself as a cyclist?

**Interviewee** 13:18

Yes, definitely.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:22

And do you think you will continue cycling to commute when you leave Groningen?

**Interviewee** 13:29

if that's possible, so if the infrastructure is at least a little bit adjusted or a company's biking, and if the distances are too big, like if there's let's say 20 kilometres somewhere, then no, I will not bike. But if it's more doable, and I can do it, like if I don't have, I don't know, transport some big furniture, whatever, then yes, I would like to do it.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:51

Okay. Do you think you're gonna also cycle to commute when you're older? Is it something that you kind of want to preserve?

**Interviewee** 14:01

I do, like I know that probably once I'm older when I get a driver's licence and I have kids, in that case a car is more suitable. But still, I would have a bike and preserve the same feeling I have now to just maintain it for the rest of my life, or for as long as I can.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 14:19

Okay, so you're saying that you think when you have kids, and more of like a family...

**Interviewee** 14:23

It may be harder, yeah, depends on how I live or how my family life looks. But if I let's say go on my own somewhere then biking will definitely be an option for me.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 14:38

Have you experienced any accidents while cycling? And I'm asking this because I want to know if the accidents have impacted your view on cycling and your enjoyment of it?

**Interviewee** 14:51

Yeah, once I had a small accident, it wasn't. It was more of stupidity because I was biking with a friend and we were reaching a fence, and I wanted to turn left, like take a U turn, and show them to stop. But the one break that I could hold at the moment didn't work so I bumped into the thing and then I fell off my bike. I fell off my seat onto my bike. So basically I bruised my vagina.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 15:22

Oh my god...

**Interviewee** 15:25

It was painful and uncomfortable. So then for the following two, three weeks, I couldn't really walk or take the bike. That sounds horrible! Yeah it was very complicated, kind of gruesome, painful, not pretty, but that was really annoying that I couldn't bike for that moment. Because taking the bus, I didn't enjoy that much even though i lived in Upsilon so it was just like two bus stops at the uni. But it hasn't changed my attitude towards biking. I still love biking and I wouldn't change it for the world. That was a shitty time but at least it was a while ago so I'm past that. I'm all good down there now. So yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 16:09

So we're honestly coming to the end of my interview, I don't really have any more questions I need to ask. Then if you could just sum up like your top three favourite things about cycling or the top three things that makes cycling so enjoyable. What would you say they are?

**Interviewee** 16:29

I would say freedom/ independence. Then the second thing would be just your surroundings and be able to enjoy them and be more mindful of where you are and the people around you. And the third thing I would say, probably the health aspect, both when it comes to being sustainable and your body and being able to have some kind of a movement. → Commuting control, mindful of your surroundings (sensory), healthy for body + environment

**Interviewee #2: Regular Cyclist**

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:01

Hello, thank you for being here and agreeing to participate in this interview. The top, the topic of our conversation will be cycling. And I want to get to know your experience and opinions on it. So this will be more like a conversation rather than interrogation between us. Feel free to express your opinions freely and openly. And if you don't understand a question, don't hesitate to say and I will rephrase it. So let's begin with the first question. For what purpose do you normally use your bike?

**Interviewee** 00:32

Like 95% of it's usually just get to and from either work, it is usually only just a mode of transport. I never go out cycling for leisure, usually, although with the quarantine now the gyms closed. Like it's now kind of crossing my mind I might do it. But yeah, historically is only purely for transport.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:56

Okay so purely to commute?

**Interviewee** 00:58

Yeah, purely to commute. Either work, friends or university. Three only ways.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:10

And why not use a car or another mode of transport?

**Interviewee** 01:15

Um, if I was in like, if I was in the UK, where the distance between like travelling isn't as like far I mean, it's further and also the roads aren't as safe cyclists. I wouldn't use it. But because the Netherlands has like, just the best roads in the world for cyclists to use and the traffic systems where, like most motorists don't get annoyed that you cycle. And it's also quicker to cycle than waiting for a bus. So it just makes a lot more sense, It's way more convenient and more practical. Especially with the I think geographical like settings of the country being so flat. The problems I would have in the UK would be there's a lot of hills and stuff so it's more effort for me to cycle elsewhere in the world. But here, it's only cycling a flat distance wherever you go. So it's never a problem for me. → [hilliness](#)

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:09

So you cycle here because it's more convenient, the distances are shorter and it's very flat, which makes it easier?

**Interviewee** 02:17

Yeah, definitely the main factors.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:27

What are any specific aspects of riding your bike that you love?

**Interviewee** 02:34

Especially over the last few years, I really enjoy like the fitness side of stuff. I don't usually do any sort of like running or anything. So I usually just train in the gym. So cycling to and from places... it like all adds up over the week. And even if it's 10 minutes, somewhere here, 10 minutes there. I always cycle a quite fast pace anyway. So like the convenience of it. It's like tied to the health benefit. It seemed to me like a really like big positive event. And then also, I think it's way cheaper than if I was to have a bus pass or like rent a car, or I even thought about getting a moped. But the cost of like actually running it day to day would just completely outweigh the benefits. The bicycle seems to be the cheapest option, but also like, the most beneficial to my health as well. So other main reasons, I think, my distance as I travel, they're never more than 15 minutes, regardless, wherever I go. So it makes a lot more sense, I think.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:37

So like if money wise, taking the car and your bike was the same, would you still choose to cycle?

**Interviewee** 03:48

if there was no financial costs involved, maybe in the winter, I would consider driving. gets nice spring summer, anywhere from basically March onwards where I'd work Oh, anyway, if I was going out, so it doesn't really affect me. Like the rain maybe is a bit more of an impact, but I would still consider cycling summer months because I think when it's a nice day, the worst thing is getting into like a car that's like 40 degrees and you have to wait 10 minutes just to look for it to cool down anyway. So like, you could hop on your bike straight away. With the distance, like here is quick, early way to cycle even if I did have a car so like, I would probably still take that into account. So cycling would be more like preferred.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 04:38

Do you ever take specific routes to uni to increase your enjoyment of the commute?

**Interviewee** 04:49

Um...yeah, I think because I have to reach the probably the same distance. And then from where I live now, one route follows the river all the way to Zernike campus. The other route, I would go that if I needed to go past like Albert Heijn or I need to get food on the way to uni then if I knew that I didn't need to get food or I've prepared like the day before and bought foods from the shop so I don't have to go in the morning, then I'd always take the scenic route just cause it's a lot quieter and also it's a nice kind of like wake up in the morning. I think when you're cycling to uni you're not going past like flows of traffic or loads of cars and stuff.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:30

When you say quieter, do you mean there's less of other cyclists around?

**Interviewee** 05:34

Uh, yes, it's kind of a bit of both. Like the university routes like the main route got to like Zernike campus is usually quite busy in the morning like rush hour traffic. But even when it's like a busy route on this straight road across the canal it's because it's such a straight road. There's no traffic lights, there's no like congestion and traffic or anything. So it's really like easy to get a unit probably easier and it's just it's just nicer as I feel like it's just a lot cleaner. So it's more physically appealing. Yeah. So it puts me in a better mood when I'm cycling to the library. I think during exam season and stuff. → sensory → affective

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:14

Do you think cycling affects your mood, like mentally?

**Interviewee** 06:20

I think the weather when I'm cycling has a big impact. Like, if I'm already like, a bit stressed out and then I see that it's raining like really heavy rain outside and I know I have to cycle to uni, then it kind of affects my mood quite a bit more polite if the weather's quite neutral. I think also cycling can like help me kind of feel a bit less stressed because it takes my mind off like whereas if I was on a bus or something if I had my music in and I'm cycling then my mind kind of just drifts away from like, if I was stressed or something and I do quite enjoy this, because I know it's kind of beneficial to my health but it's something I wouldn't be doing if I was in the UK. → relaxing

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:05

What is like the one thing you think is better about cycling to commute then taking the car?

**Interviewee** 07:25

There's quite a few things probably, it's kind of just a lot the lifestyle around that like I think it puts you into like a good habit in the morning like wakes you up. Especially for morning commutes anyway. For me, like it's kind of hard to start like set my day, right? Because if I if I was in a car always have the tendency... like it's comfort. It doesn't wake me up. Like you can sit there with your heater on and like you can still be tired when you get to work if you'd like to drive and then if you're cycling it kind of forces you to start the day. I think a bit of morning exercise is really important for like kind of setting your day right from the very off.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 08:07

And if you could describe your perfect commute to university, what aspects would it entail?

**Interviewee** 08:16

Um, no wind. Blue skies, probably like warm enough for like a jumper but not a coat so I don't get too sweaty, and yeah, also just caught quite quiet roads and stuff. But the quiet, quietness of the roads is like a massive factor. It's more just like the weather conditions or anything. And the fact that I'm not in a rush. Like if I leave, leave a couple minutes early where I don't have to like strenuously paddle. I can kind of like leisurely the cycle, then I quite like it.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 08:53

when you kind of get to enjoy the activity of cycling itself.

**Interviewee** 08:58

I quite like just like looking around when I'm cycling, I just look straight as if I'm either on the river. And there's sometimes like, if you get lucky there's like herrings or like some nice animals and some other like by the river beds and stuff. I don't really look like a native person, but I appreciate it when its there. → animals, water...

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 09:19

So cycling allows you to take in your surroundings better?

**Interviewee** 09:23

Yeah. And I think for me, like seeing more like natural environment around me is a lot more common than like being in a big city. Like if I lived in the city centre or something, I prefer to like cycle through a park on the way to uni than just like the main road. Like greenery, nature...

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 09:46

And what is your favourite part about cycling to uni? So like, what aspect of your commute do you look forward to the most when you set off?

**Interviewee** 10:00

The mindset it gets me in for the day, like, a lot of time if I wake up late, like rushing around the house, at least when I know that I'm cycling, it gives me like that 10 minutes just to like, kind of plan my day out when I'm cycling or like set my mind straight. If I was originally

stressed in the morning, I start by usually getting somewhere by cycling. I'm usually like pretty level headed. So it gives me like a good opportunity to start my day, right. I think that's probably the best thing about it. For me, anyway.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 10:33

So then do you prefer using your commuting time as kind of like me time to think about your day, plan your day? Or do you also very much enjoy the social aspect of cycling?

**Interviewee** 10:51

If I'm having like a really busy week, then sometimes I quite like the independence of cycling, where I can listen to like one or two really good songs, and then just kind of semi plan what I'm going to do during that day. But then if I'm not as stressed and it's not exam season, then cycling in the morning with friends is quite nice. I probably prefer independence over, like, cycling with someone else.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 11:23

Do you think you would be able to get the same amount of the sociability aspect if you were to take the car or the bus?

**Interviewee** 11:35

Yeah, I think the car would probably be a more social thing. Just because you obviously have that ability to have like four people at once, like you can have a group conversation than if you're cycling. But if I was going to have a group conversation with two people, I'd much rather have the conversation with two people on a bikes and if I was having two people in a car. Although I think the effects of the conversation would probably gonna say, but I guess it's down to personal preference.--> better to socialise in a car

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 12:08

What do you find the most annoying about your commute? Something that would disturb your enjoyment of the cycle?

**Interviewee** 12:21

I get frustrated by all people on ebikes who don't know how to cycle. That's more just them. I think that's just a problem with that. Cycling in general is very dependent on I think the weather. I really don't like cycling, or like there's times where I've missed lectures just because of the weather has been bad. Which I guess you don't have the aspects when you drive in because you're kind of sheltered more. On the other hand, there's a good feelgood factor when you're you know, that it's like, environmentally friendly. I think that's a massive aspect that I probably mentioned earlier.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:02

Positive for the environment, no damage?

**Interviewee** 13:07

Yeah, but probably the most annoying thing is probably elderly people on the bikes, or whether there's one of the two.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:15

And elderly people, is it because they kind of obstruct your flow?

**Interviewee** 13:19

Yeah, I cycle quite quickly in general, wherever I go, but I think a lot of people on E bikes don't, they don't realise how quick they go. Or like, they also sort of if they don't have any bike, they're quite oblivious to people around them. It might be because they don't really have much mobility about their neck or like, they can't look around their surroundings as much. But yeah, for me, I don't find a massive problem because I know like they have to get around is the main way to transport here. But I am more cautious when I see someone on an E bike because I kind of know that there's the chance that they'll do something unexpected.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 14:02

So weather and slow people in ebikes are your two most annoying things.

**Interviewee** 14:11

Yeah, the weather is probably the top one, cause cycling is very much dependent on the weather.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 14:16

Okay. And finally, Groningen has a very strong cycling culture here. The fact that the city is catered towards cyclists and the fact that everyone else pretty much does it, do you think that influences your enjoyment of the activity?

**Interviewee** 14:40

Well, yeah, I think especially coming from a country where Cycling is kind of seen with a kind of negative stigma around it in the UK because, like it's nice to do on a leisure activity, but as a mode of transport...people get very angry with cyclists because like our roads just aren't built for it. So over here when you see everyone's cycle, I think, for me, it just makes it more enjoyable because I also feel like they're doing more to like, kind of help the environment and be like, build a better future. And it seems like when they do it here so easily, and like how successful it is here. It just makes me question why other places aren't able to implement it at the same level. But yeah, the fact that everyone does, like its everyone's mode of transport, it definitely makes it more enjoyable because it means like, if I go out in bad weather, I know everyone is out in bad weather. So I know everyone's gonna be in the same mood when they get into the classroom. So it doesn't make me feel bad about myself for driving. I Have thought about buying a car but it's just not the norm here. If I bought a car for myself, it'd be unusual, slightly selfish towards the environment. → Cycling culture means that cyclists are taken more seriously + makes tolerating bad weather easier and overall, cycling is more enjoyable

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 15:15

So what I have come to understand is that your top three most enjoyable factors of cycling would be the aspect of physical exercise, the environment?

**Interviewee** 16:16

Yeah, the environments for every second and then also like the like side of mental health where it's like it helps clear your mind in the morning. It's probably the last one. So goes physical exercise, healthy environment and mental health.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 16:33

Cool. Well, we have come to the end of our interview and I have no more questions to ask. Is there anything that you'd like to add about cycling and why you find it so enjoyable?



**Interviewee** 16:47

I think it helps especially here, in the Netherlands, like its the market. It's so cheap is to rent a bike here and how to best own one here. And the fact that crime rates are so low as well also helps with the fact that like people can just cycle because in other places like the UK, if you had any nice bike over probably 200/250 euros you'd have to buy a very expensive lock for or there's a very good chance it'll get stolen so I think just like the general social, demographics of the city. Especially the student city as well makes it more enjoyable because I think especially as you probably noticed that as well when you cycle probably two thirds of the people you see cycling are universities students. And it's even nice to see the even kids as young as like maybe like nine or 10 are still cycling school in the morning. Like I think being able to see that kids are able to commute at that age also reinforces is quite hard, like a safe environment to grow up in and live in. And also the fact that cars respects the right away for cyclists is really important, because you know that you're quite safe because then you don't need to wear a helmet. I think if I had to wear a helmet, then maybe I'd reconsider cycling because I don't like wearing one basically.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 18:21

It definitely makes sense. Like if a city is planned for cyclists, if it's accommodated for a cyclist and like you said, If everyone respects cyclists, it's a lot more enjoyable to cycle.

**Interviewee** 18:33

I feel like it is almost safer than a car for me. And it definitely outweighs the, like costs, or the benefits that I get from it are way way higher.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 18:46

Do you think you're going to cycle to commute when you leave Groningen?

**Interviewee** 18:51

I think it depends on the city I live in. And it also depends on how far you have to commute to work. I think for a place like here, where everything is so close regardless of your like location, it just makes complete sense to do it and also because of how flat it is. It also depends on maybe my job. There's quite a few factors that will probably be involved in it but if the opportunity was there I definitely would take it.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 19:22

Okay, so like distance, safety.

**Interviewee** 19:25

Yeah, distance, safety, amount of hills...and weather would be the main ones. Everything ticks the boxes here, especially in the summer, so it's kind of perfect. I think the only time I don't enjoy it too much is probably like December, January, February, them three months of the year and then the winter. For the rest, I love in spring as well like when you get all the new flowers coming up and like the daffodils and stuff, and you get to cycle through the park...it's a really nice cycle, even at night and stuff as well. Like it's perfect. Yeah, I think that's everything.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 20:08

Ok great. Thank you!

**Interviewee #3: Regular Cyclist**

Hello, thank you for agreeing to participate in my interview. This will be recorded. Are you okay with that?

**Interviewee 00:09**

Yes, I'm okay with that.

**Greta Jeruseviciute 00:11**

So today I'm going to ask you questions about your cycling experience. And I want this to be more of like a conversation between us. So feel free to express any opinions and ideas that come to mind. I'm going to start off by asking for what purpose do you normally use your bike.

**Interviewee 00:31**

So I have currently two bikes, but one is broken so my main bike I'm just using to commute to university as well as do basic, let's say shopping activities like cycling to the supermarket, cycling to Aclo - a sports facility of the university- to the university... basically cycle everywhere, but it's more of like a way to get to places rather than to cycle itself but I can say that Constantin (a friend of mine) he started borrowing me his racing bike. So, since a few weeks now, two times only I was also cycling to sports,

**Greta Jeruseviciute 01:27**

So you cycle to commute, run errands, sports... literally for everything essentially.

**Interviewee 01:33**

Basically, yeah, whatever I can.

**Greta Jeruseviciute 01:36**

And why do you not use a car or another mode of transport to commute?

**Interviewee 01:43**

Okay. So I guess several reasons. First reason is that a car would be quite expensive to first of all, purchase and then also to maintain, money that I don't have. And secondly, because I consider myself to certain extent being environmentally aware. And I'm not a big car fan simply because of the connected emissions that are being produced by driving the car. And thirdly, also because the city that I'm living in, I feel like is structured in a way that makes driving a car quite uncomfortable and less pleasurable. Yeah, three reasons would be yeah. Like if one has to rate them I would say it's mainly environmental reasons to be honest.

**Greta Jeruseviciute 02:04**

Environmental is the most important?

**Interviewee 02:45**

Yeah, even if I would have the money to to buy a car and to maintain it, I would actually decide against it, I would say.

**Greta Jeruseviciute 02:53**

What about in comparison to a bus? Why would you rather cycle than take a bus for example?

**Interviewee** 03:07

Because cycling you're a lot more independent when you cycle I mean you can basically decide on when you want to go there no timetables did you have to like schedule. I enjoy cycling a lot to be honest.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:20

And in what way do you enjoy cycling?

**Interviewee** 03:32

I think i mean it's just basic physical activity which is always enjoyable which some people like and I always enjoy to move and to do like sport activities. So that might be a reason and then...i don't know, I never thought about it that way.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:55

Do you for example, when you cycle do you always cycle alone or with other people? So like to use that as a social activity?

**Interviewee** 04:11

No, not really, to be honest, I quite enjoy cycling alone. Okay, so I could, for example, drive to university together with my housemates. And quite often actually I decided against it because like the commute to university to sports, whatever, kind of like excess time that is for myself that you know, I'm just with me and I use it to listen to music, for example and listen to podcasts. And yeah, so I actually think about it quite enjoy cycling for myself because they get time for me. Yeah, because I mean, normally, especially as a student, I can imagine you always quite busy and social hang out with other people's So it's always nice to actually find some time to be honest with yourself. At least that's how I look at it.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:07

Does weather have an influence on whether you enjoy it or not?

**Interviewee** 05:14

Whether I enjoy it or not? Yes, I definitely enjoy cycling less if there's a lot of like, wind, rain. If I'm cycling the cold Yeah, for sure. But it doesn't really influence me not cycling. I would say I'm always cycling, but that might also be because just that's normal thing to do in Groningen, like we're living the city, because most people don't really seem to care. In Berlin, for example, my my second home city, it might be different, like there if it would be rainy, windy, snowy, I might actually decide against it and take the bus instead because that's just what most people in that city would do.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:59

Okay, so does that mean that the culture of the place has a strong influence on whether you cycle or not and even like your enjoyment of cycling?

**Interviewee** 06:15

I'm not sure if it really influences my enjoyment of the activity. But it does. I would say influence my decision to take the bicycle okay against taking mode of transport.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:33

Okay.

**Interviewee** 06:34

Because it's just a group fact I guess like if you see everybody else cycling in the rain, you kind of get used to it. And yeah, then I guess this is just a normal thing to do. But then as well, I think just like the availability of other public transport plays a role. Like in Groningen in I think it's more difficult, like bus connections are less frequent and less connected than ever Berlin, for example, so it will just you will save a lot more time just cycling whereas in Berlin, If you try to take the bus because of rain, it might actually also be much longer than cycling in the first place.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:13

And what about like cycling infrastructure and the facilities that are made available for cyclists? For example, does that have an influence on your enjoyment of the activity?

**Interviewee** 07:27

For sure? Yeah, for sure. Cycling in Groningen is alot more fun just because you don't really have to fear for cars, you know, like you feel a lot more safe. There tend to be less traffic lights as well feel. So there's more of a flow, which also makes a lot more enjoyable. I think every time when you have to stop, it takes away some of the pleasure. Yeah. Because once you start cycling and you're in that flow and you can just like cycle continuously, it's a lot more fun. So in that regard, the infrastructure does for sure has an impact. But also maybe that's again, relating to culture, the way that others look at cyclists. So it went, for example, I can just like always compare Groningen to Berlin. Because these are like places that I cycle in. In Berlin, cyclists are a lot less, again, maybe part of the culture, a lot less frequent. So you are basically the minority as a cyclists, and the majority which will be people driving cars will pay less attention towards you and care less about you. So in that regard, it is more dangerous as well to cycle in Berlin, which I am convinced refrains many people don't actually take the bicycle. It will in western hooligan. I was even told that if you as the cyclists get into an accident withcar, most of the time the car will. I mean, that's like the normal procedure will be the first to be blamed for that. Really? I actually heard the other way around. But I, I was told this a long time ago, so I'm not actually sure if I'm right. I'm also not 100% sure. But just regarding the infrastructure itself already makes a lot safer, which is nice.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 09:35

Honestly, if you don't have to think as much about safety while cycling and just makes it a lot more relaxing and pleasant to cycle.

**Interviewee** 09:42

Exactly, yeah. And maybe it's also like getting the feeling that you are welcome in that place as a cyclist, you know, to see the whole city basically designed for you know, that might in your subconscious also have some impact on the whole like cycling experience.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 10:00

Yeah, for sure. And when you cycle do you make the conscious effort to, for example, cycle through certain places in the city that would make your cycling trip more enjoyable?

**Interviewee** 10:23

I used to when I was still living in my old place, I was not like on purpose. I wasn't basically taking the shorter route that would take me over the, let's say, Main Street where most

cyclists would drive but instead I was taking like a side street then okay. Yeah, it wasn't. So the side street actually didn't have a cycling pass, but there was just a lot less traffic there and was just not quite so and I was cycling next to a park that looks quite nice. But I think that, yeah can't say it was shorter than the alternate way, but I definitely enjoyed it more just because it was more quiet and the nature next to it. It depends also on like, if I'm late or not I mean if I'm late obviously I would take the shortest way. But once you have time on the hand I think... it's a difficult question actually. Like if I think about it now, I wonder if I really would change my my cycling routes a lot, depending on which class time at hand or not. Yes, I can also imagine that once you start taking a certain route, you just like start to get used to it and then like, routine takes over?

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 11:47

Yeah, but my question is more like, does the scenery, for example, if there's a lot of nature, water or quietness... is that what impacts you to take that route because it makes cycling more enjoyable?

**Interviewee** 12:07

Yeah, it makes sense. So the question basically is not like, does the scenery make the experience more important or like pleasurable? Because it does for sure. Like, it makes a lot more enjoyable. To cycle through like, parks, whatever else, for sure, yeah, so the example that I could give you concerning my old residency, I was actually taking a route that I think was maybe even a bit longer, less designed for cyclists, but just like more quiet, which I which was why I enjoyed more. Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 12:54

What about aspects of cycling that you don't enjoy. Are there any?

**Interviewee** 13:05

I tend to always cycle too fast, because I enjoy going fast and also because I tend to be quite late. And then whenever I arrive at university, and you start sitting down... the cold wind, which kind of like cooled you down, so you didn't feel how fast you were going and all the basically exercise and once you sit down you start sweating so much, and that's like the worst part of it, but it's not while cycling its as a result of it. But while cycling, maybe...maybe other cyclists?

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:44

Do they annoy you?

**Interviewee** 13:49

Yeah, if there are too many I may say that might be annoying and... no but apart from that i fucking love cycling to be honest.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:59

Would you identify yourself as a cyclist?

**Interviewee** 14:02

Yeah, for sure.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 14:05

So like if you were to go to another part of the world on holiday, visiting a friend... anywhere else, would you make the conscious effort to try and cycle there?

**Interviewee** 14:14

Yeah. So when i went on an exchange to Japan last semester, I went a few months before the official start of university Japan so I could travel and I decided to buy a bicycle and then cycle around one part of the country which for the first time that I was actually completing like a bigger cycling trip was really nice. And then I kept the bicycle while studying in Osaka and I used to commute to university instead of like having to buy a metro ticket. Okay, which also was quite nice and it saved me a lot of money. And once we had this, like some friends of mine did the same and also got a bicycle to commute to University. But then once we had it, we actually tried to like transform some trips that we had planned and adapt them in a way that we could use the bicycle to get there, like incorporated in some way. So we always wanted to go to Kyoto, for example. And then we planned on just like cycling there. And then we figured out some other spots that we could visit. And so that way, having a bicycle and really consciously wanting to use it kind of influence the way that we planned our trips.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 15:41

Okay, so cycling for you is a very intrinsic sort of pleasure. You just love it and generally find it fun?

**Interviewee** 15:49

Yeah, I'm not sure why. Yeah, so it might have been mainly Yeah, I enjoy it. It's exercise as well. I mean I still see this exercise at least.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 16:03

Moderate exercise?

**Interviewee** 16:06

Exactly. Yeah. So sometimes if you haven't done any sports for a while, I am at least thinking that I could at least go on a cycling trip. And it's fun. And I support the whole idea behind it. And I think it has a lot of future actually for like transportation itself. So that's why I would always try to like, yeah, use it as much as possible. So that's maybe also why it's fun to try to figure out like, how far can you actually also get by cycling?

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 16:38

Okay, final question. Will you continue, or do you think you'll continue cycling to commute when you leave Groningen?

**Interviewee** 16:47

Yes, I will. Definitely want to. I was thinking about that already. Because I'm quite sure that I'm going to leave Groningen again. And I'm not sure yet where I want to go. Yeah, but I know for a fact that I would want to move to a place where I can cycle.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 17:05

And when you say where you can cycle Do you mean like where the infrastructure is in place where the culture is in place? What would in what would make for example, a place bad for cycling,

**Interviewee** 17:21

First of all, I would say, if I'm at a place where there's just like no way that I can cover the distances in time to get from, let's say, downtown LA, like, I'm probably not going to move to LA because downtown is just too far to where most people live, I would guess. Distance is quite important. And then also infrastructure to some extent, like I don't need I don't expect any new place to have the same infrastructure that Groningen had because I think Groningen is world leading that regard. Um, but I think you can still see if the city has at least lets call it safe conditions for cycling, so even if there are not any cycling paths at the side of the road you might still like figure out if it's safe to drive or not I mean I guess like Bangkok is not the best place to cycling and so distance and safety for sure. Culture not that much I'm not sure if if I would be the only one to cycle if that would really influence my decision to move there a lot.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 18:33

For you it seems that the love for cycling is more like intrinsically embedded that you don't give a you don't care if other people cycle or not.

**Interviewee** 18:40

Exactly what make me even more cool again. Climate might also be important. Yeah, but climate doesn't really seem to keep many people in Holland again from cycling, you know? In middle of winter when its minus 10 degrees.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 18:59

We've come to the end of our interview. Is there anything else that you would like to add about cycling and why it is so pleasurable?

**Interviewee** 19:15

Yeah, so your research is mainly about like the cognitive kind of like perception of cycling?

**Greta Jeruseviciute**

No, it can be anything. I'm just my research is about finding out what makes cycling so pleasurable because yes, cyclists are found to be the happiest out of all modes of transport. And so I want to find out what is it about cycling that makes people so happy and enjoy it so much. And that can be anything.

**Interviewee**

Okay, I see. Yeah, yeah, I really think like I want to press like the fact of independence I guess that's quite unique. At least for me. Also I enjoy taking care of and fixing my bike, I love it and it even has a name. It's me and the bike.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 19:54

So you mean like choosing when to leave, when you arrive, what route to take...

**Interviewee** 19:59

*How fast you want to go as well. Maybe you could say like, I don't know, modern society is so like, this is limiting everybody so much in like, where they can go and how they can move everything's be so like predefined even if it's nice to have some like freedom on your bike, you know at least can decide the way you want to go and how fast*

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 20:22

Fair enough. I actually agree with that myself. Thank you!

**Interviewee** 20:29

No problem.

Interviewee #4: Cycling enthusiast

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:01

Hi, thank you for being here and agreeing to participate in this interview, the topic of our conversation will be cycling. And I want to get to know your experience and opinions on it. So this will be more like a conversation between us rather than an interrogation. So feel free to express your opinions freely and openly. If you don't understand a question, don't hesitate to say and I will rephrase it. So let's begin with the first question. For what purpose do you normally use your bike

**Interviewee** 00:29

For leisure, like as a hobby and for getting to school or just generally getting around since I don't have a car

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:39

Okay, so for commuting, and pretty much everything else?

**Interviewee** 00:42

Yeah, pretty much everything to do with day to day travel.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:45

Okay, and specifically for commuting. Why not use another mode of transport?

**Interviewee** 00:52

With cycling you don't really have much costs like you have with public transport. It's easier to maintain it by than a car. And my journeys aren't generally very long. So there's no need for different modes of transport, like cycling...you can do a 30 minute cycle for essentially free, whereas a bus route would be one more complex. And two, it would cost me some money, and i dont really want to pay the money.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:23

Um, did you cycle to commute when you lived back home?

**Interviewee** 01:31

Yeah, yeah, if there's a bike available, I'll use the bike. But being in Netherlands, it's far easier to use a bike to get around because the Netherlands is so based on bikes. When I'm back home, it's a little bit less safe. So I'm less inclined to cycle but I still prefer to cycle because of the things I've said before. Like it's free and it's easier and it's generally for short distances.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:00

So would you say then that the aspect of safety makes you enjoy cycling more?

**Interviewee** 02:07

Yeah, for sure. Well here, especially by thinking general safety kind of encourages me to cycle in one place more than cycling in another place. So, yeah, I'd be more inclined to cycle



in a country which is safe to cycle in rather than a country which has less kind of infrastructure behind it.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:33

Okay. And it kind of seems obvious, almost that if you're more inclined to cycle somewhere, you will enjoy it more as well.

**Interviewee** 02:41

I think I enjoy it the same amount wherever I am. Okay, I'm just less inclined to cycle in places where it's less safe. Not saying that I enjoy any less, it just means I have to think a little bit more. The things I enjoy about cycling don't necessarily diminish. It's just I'm less likely to cycle

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:00

So what aspects of cycling do you enjoy the most? What is it that makes you enjoy it so much?

**Interviewee** 03:06

The freedom to kind of control the speed at which you can go, what routes you can take and kind of the enjoyment of having fresh air instead of being stuck in a car or inside a bus where you're pretty stationary, and you have a very limited number of routes you can take and kind of you can't control your speed. You can't control anything really you can only control where you go. Whereas on a bike you can control pretty much everything that you're doing. You can stop whenever you want. You can take breaks, you can go fast, you can get slower, you can you can enjoy the things around you, you can get somewhere quickly. Just the aspect of control I think that I like about cycling... control and freedom. Yeah. And there's too many things.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:55

You mentioned fresh air. Would you say that your enjoyment of cycling is determined by the weather then?

**Interviewee** 04:03

A hundred percent yeah, when when it's it's raining or snowing, one it becomes less safe so I'm less inclined to cycle and yeah, it becomes less enjoyable because it feels more like a chore and a necessity as opposed to something I want to do out of enjoyment.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 04:24

And then season would also come into play?

**Interviewee** 04:26

Yes. Summer is probably the most enjoyable time for cycling because you have the warmth you have the fresh air you, it's not a chore to get around. You can leave early. You can cycle slowly, but when it's raining or when it's snowing. It's Yeah, it it's a little bit less enjoyable. Like the wind kind of puts you out of control a little bit. The more control you have for me, the more enjoyable it is cause you don't have to worry about anything else.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 04:53

In Groningen, a lot of people cycle. Do you think that particularly influences your enjoyment of cycling?

**Interviewee** 05:16

Yeah, I think it does encourage it because like you see other people cycling, and I want to cycle as well. But I think the main thing that encourages is the infrastructure and the fact that the city is so cycling based...that's more encouraging than seeing other people cycling because let's say everyone was walking or everyone was taking the bus. I don't think that would encourage me to take the bus just because of the people taking the bus. I think I enjoy cycling regardless of whether there are people on the road when cycling.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:59

Do you ever take specific routes to increase your enjoyment of your ride?

**Interviewee** 06:04

Yeah, mainly when I have extra time I'll take a more scenic route, I'll try and avoid the city. Or I try to avoid other cyclists so I can kind of control how quickly I cycle and whether I have to worry about other people. If it's nighttime, I'll probably take a more scenic route so I can avoid cars. If I leave early to go to university, I'll take more scenic route and kind of have a nice start the day. Yeah, so I will take different routes just because I can sometimes.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:45

And what about the social aspect of cycling? Is that something you particularly enjoy or try to avoid?

**Interviewee** 06:52

I think it's like a positive of cycling but it's not something that would kind of be one of the main reasons I cycle you know, like it's an advantage. But it's not the main reasons that I cycle.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:06

So when you cycle is it more like "me time"?

**Interviewee** 07:10

Yeah, it's definitely me time, I haven't headphones in and I prefer to kind of be alone on a cycle because, again, control, I don't have to worry about what other people are doing.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:21

And that aspect of control and freedom is something you believe you couldn't get with, for example, a car?

**Interviewee** 07:27

Yeah. For sure. With public transport especially you have no leeway over what route you take, or how quickly you can get there. You're literally you're limited by how quickly the bus goes and abide with what the bus does. Or with the car. You're limited by the rules of the road and you have to stick to a speed limit. You have to you have certain ways you can go especially in the city, you can only do a certain number of routes whereas if you're on a bike you can take yeah As many routes as you want, I think the only difference in that case would be a long distance journey, where cycling just isn't feasible and a train is more useful. But for day to day activities, cycling preferable.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 08:17

What would make a place unsuitable for cycling in your opinion?

**Interviewee** 08:23

Probably like the absolute lack of infrastructure so no by bike rides in place, or roads, which are like too small to have a bike and a car on which makes you kind of feel unsafe on the road. If the journeys were too big, if I had to do more than that's a 30 minute ride today, I probably wouldn't do that. Because it's just I mean, it would be good exercise and I think I would enjoy it but at the same time it might be unsustainable in terms of like getting around.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 08:57

For commuting?

**Interviewee** 08:57

Yeah, but I think that most things in this city, like the size of the city, the infrastructure in place like those, encourage it, but without those it would be less enjoyable to cycle.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 09:13

And if you could describe your idea of the perfect the most enjoyable cycle ride to university, what would it entail?

**Interviewee** 09:27

I think it would be like an exclusive cycling lane which is surrounded by just nice scenery like going by the canal or going through trees or like a park and just try and basically avoiding all traffic. So yeah, a structured route and nice scenery. Yeah, I think that those two would make the commute to university. To the most enjoyable, I don't think there's very much extra that is needed less exposure to cars, less exposure to motor vehicles. And probably less like congestion. So if you have like a steady flow of traffic, so I'm just imagining the road on a little road, the little road, where you have the cross road and you have like a constant stop and start, like just that, in itself kind of makes that cycle a little bit of a pain in the ass.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 10:42

Because you have to stop and start a lot? So it's nice having a continuous continuous flow movement?

**Interviewee** 10:44

Yeah, but that's only because you're exposed other modes of transport during the during the way like if I'm going from my house to university, instead of going across these certain junctions, it's kind of more enjoyable because I know I don't don't have to think about that at any point, I'm like, okay, I can just go from A to B not stopping. And that's far more enjoyable than having to go from A to B with five stops in the middle, which is also what you get from cars and buses, you're constantly stop starting. Whereas on a bike, you have much more of a flow that you can, you can control your speed so you can choose whether you want to stop or not, or if you just want to take a different route. Yeah, that smooth flow of movement makes it feel more... makes it feel less boring, makes the journey feel faster.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 11:46

And what is your favourite part about cycling to uni?

**Interviewee** 12:01

The little energy boost that it gives you, kind of wakes you up while you're cycling, I think, whereas if you in your car, you're stationary, you're not doing anything, but when you're on a bike, you're moving, you're kind of waking yourself up.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 12:11

So is the physical aspect, something you particularly enjoy from cycling?

**Interviewee** 12:16

Yeah, I think, again, it's not one of the main things, but I think it's one of the advantages, like, it might be slightly slower than a car, which doesn't discriminate against both. But I think the physical activity side of it is a plus because you don't actually have to do anything extra to get a little bit of exercise in per day. Like every day, you get 30 minutes of exercise in just from doing your commute instead of having to go out of your way and do more exercise. You know, like just doing cardio, like it's a nice little break. It breaks up your day with a little bit activity. I think is a very nice car and one of the advantages of cycling

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:00

I mean, moving our body a little bit always helps with mood...

**Interviewee** 13:05

Yeah, helps with good blood circulation. Helps with emotions, with studying... helps with getting you awake in the morning? It helps with a lot of things.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:13

Let's say in Groningen, it was as easy to travel from home to university with a car or bike in terms of like, the distance and just as easy, would you still prefer to take your bike?

**Interviewee** 13:30

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:32

And what if money was not an issue?

**Interviewee** 13:40

I mean, I think money is the main part of it. I think that it's just the simplicity of a bike like a car you have to worry about so many other things like where would you buy an ad from and so on. But with a bike you just get on you go. But yeah, I think I would still prefer to cycle even if the city was in terms of its design around cars or bikes like it would be as easy. I still prefer to take a bike. Because environmentally one it's better to I don't have driver's licence, but even if we did our driver's licence, it's not worth having a car here. Because it means I have to worry about gas it means I have to worry about being safe. being safe on the road, like yeah, there's there's more freedom with a bike. You have fun. Yeah, there's more freedom. And it's just more enjoyable for me. Because I don't have to I don't have to worry about these things, which we've just talked about.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 14:52

Okay. And would you identify yourself as a cyclist?

**Interviewee** 14:56

Yeah, I mean, especially in the city. At home it's my main main mode of transport given I have a bike so yeah, I call myself a cyclist.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 15:05

So would you say that you kind of intrinsically enjoy the activity of cycling in itself?

**Interviewee** 15:12

Yeah, I enjoy cycling more than I enjoy walking. Yeah, I enjoy cycling more than I enjoy getting onto a bus. I enjoy cycling more than getting onto a train.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 15:21

And you said previously that you also cycle as a hobby, like for recreation. Could you then also say that because cycling to commute is almost like acting out your hobby?

**Interviewee** 15:58

Yeah, it does make the morning commute more enjoyable because it means I don't get a kind of dreading having to go to work because I know that I'm going to enjoy my commute a little bit. I'm not gonna be annoyed by the fact that I take my bike in the same way I might be annoyed by having to wait for the bus every morning. I just get on my bike when I go. And it means that Yeah, I can enjoy going to university, the journey in itself that is.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 16:53

Are there any aspects of cycling you don't particularly like,

**Interviewee** 16:57

Having to maintain my bike? I mean, okay. I know I'd have to do with the car but because I'm not too experienced with fixing my bike, sometimes it can feel like a chore. But at the same time, it's a new skill which I'm learning and kind of like learning how to use it by learning how to fix a bike. And that in itself is rewarding. Just being able to fix a tire, change a wheel like very quickly. Although it's like not cycling itself, it's part of it for me, because I own my bike and because I work on my bike, it means that I have one more aspect of it, which I can kind of associate the activity with. So cycling for me, it's not just cycling, it's repairing my bike as well.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 17:54

So do you like that you don't like that?

**Interviewee** 17:56

Uh, I don't like having to do it. By I like the fact that I can do it and I'm learning how to do it as well. So right now, I think it's more of a pain in the ass because I'm not very good at it. But when I get better at it when I get more efficient with it, it will be something I enjoy. Because it's something which I know how to do that. I don't have to worry about it. I can just do it. But right now it's like, could I break my bike? while I'm doing this? Like, that's the issue. If I get on my bike after I just fixed it I'm like, is the front wheel going to fall out on a brake? But as I started doing it more and more, you learn to trust yourself. You learn how to do these things and you don't feel so scared about it. You gain confidence in your ability and gain happiness from it as well.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 18:45

Well do you think you will continue cycling to me to commute when you leave Groningen?

**Interviewee**

For sure. Given that I can given the city or place that I'm in kind of allows for it. So if I'm in a major city, then yeah, sure. But if I'm in the countryside, and I have to commute 45 minutes to an hour a day, it might not be worthwhile. But that doesn't mean that I don't enjoy cycling.

And do you think you'll try and pursue cycling to commute throughout the rest of your life even when you're older?

**Greta Jeruseviciute 19:31**

It really, really depends on the city and the location that you're in because, like one of the things in the UK is like the attitude towards towards cyclist is far more negative than it is here. And I think that just that in itself, like if you're in a place where there's a negative attitude towards cyclists that you're getting beat on the road constantly and like get the fuck off the road, then that makes cycling less enjoyable and like if I'm in a country which is like, inhospitable towards cyclists then that would kind of diminish my desire to cycle in that place, not because of not enjoying cycling itself, but because of like societal acceptance of cycling.

**Greta Jeruseviciute 20:40**

I mean, I get that attitudes and especially negative attitudes towards cycling would make the activity less enjoyable to perform. If you feel like you're not as looked out for in the streets, or you're more in danger.

**Interviewee 20:52**

Yeah, that goes back to the aspect of safety that we were discussing, not having people who are aware of you not having people who are looking out for you. Because here like, if you're driving, you are constantly on the lookout for cyclists because they're so common. Yeah, but when you're in the UK, it's not so common to have cyclists on the road, therefore drivers are less aware of them, therefore it's less safe to drive. And that's culminated with the fact there's no infrastructure in place. So no infrastructure, less awareness, and kind of a poor attitude towards cyclists, all kind of contributes to me not wanting to ride more, but that doesn't necessarily take away from the physical activity of cycling. I enjoy the fresh air and the fact that I'm moving to get to work. The fact that I've got freedom to choose where I go, these things are socially accepted.

**Greta Jeruseviciute 22:04**

Well, we have come to the end of our interview. I have no more questions that I'm going to ask. Is there anything you would like to add about cycling and why you enjoy it so much?

**Interviewee 22:20**

Okay. Well in that case, thank you.

**Greta Jeruseviciute 22:23**

You're welcome.

## Interviewee #5: Regular cyclist

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:01

Hello, thank you for being here and agreeing to participate in this interview, the topic of our conversation will be cycling, and I want to get to know your experience and opinions on it. So this will be more like a conversation between us rather than an interrogation. So feel free to express your opinions freely and openly. And if you don't understand a question, don't hesitate and I will rephrase it. So let's begin with the first question. For what purpose do you normally use your bike for?

**Interviewee** 00:32

So I use it mainly for two purposes. For one, I use it for just transport in my everyday life, so cycling to university or getting groceries or whatever, but then also using it as a recreation for sport. So when the weather's nice, I like to go out for bike ride with my friends.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:49

Okay. And specifically for commuting. Why do you not use another mode of transport like a car or a bus?

**Interviewee** 00:58

Yeah, so the main reason I would think is like the culture within the Netherlands. Because the cycling culture here is so big it needs the infrastructure being developed really well. And therefore, it makes it really easy to cycle anywhere. And it's just so convenient because you can just park anywhere, you know, you don't need to search for a parking spot with a car and you're not limited to where you have to go like with a bus, we only have service stations.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:24

Okay. So, usually like the convenience, the really good infrastructure in place makes it a lot more pleasurable to cycle.

**Interviewee** 01:33

Yeah, for sure.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:36

And do you cycle to commute anywhere else apart from Groningen? So let's say back home, for example.

**Interviewee** 01:43

Back home was all car based, so I would always drive everywhere. And that was because of exactly the opposite. So they didn't have any infrastructure for biking. And, yeah, I would still cycle for recreation, but it was very different to cycling from here, for sure.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:01

Okay, and what aspects of riding your bike to commute do you enjoy the most?

**Interviewee** 02:12

Um...just the ease of it that I don't ever have the risk of getting stuck in traffic, or yeah, I don't I know, that I can always leave at the same time and I'll be there at the same time. And,

of course the weather sometimes is bad. But then when the weather's nice, it's even more enjoyable to take a bike ride to the university.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:33

And you still cycle if the weather's bad?

**Interviewee** 02:35

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:38

Because of the convenience? It's easier to use your bike here than like, let's say your car.

**Interviewee** 02:43

Yeah, for sure.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:45

Do you ever take a specific route to increase your enjoyment of your bike ride?

**Interviewee** 02:51

I have occasionally Yeah. If I just have a little bit of spare time or I leave a little bit too early then sometimes I do take a different route to university.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:00

And what kind of route is that?

**Interviewee** 03:02

So it's more like I don't know, if you know Rijkdeep? Just along the canal when you're coming like from the, from the jumbo at the park. Yeah. And then you can go along the canal and just go sort of all the way back to aclo and then come back into the, into the campus, that's sort of the route

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:25

And what is it about the route that makes the trip more enjoyable for you?

**Interviewee**

It's just that it's not through like the city so like it's more along the water and more within like a little bit of green and stuff. So it gives you a little bit of a break from all the cars and the it's also a lot easier to cycle because there's no traffic lights or anything, so you can just cycle through.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 04:00

Do you enjoy the social aspect of cycling?

**Interviewee** 04:14

Yeah, I think that's a very nice aspect of cycling. Because, like, if you have, for example, a meeting with people at university or you're going, going somewhere for lunch afterwards, it's very easy to just go together to cycle together in a group and you don't lose each other. You don't have to like, sort of disconnect and then meet somewhere else later. So you're always just yeah, and you're able to have a conversation on the bus. I think definitely, I enjoy the social aspect as well.



**Greta Jeruseviciute** 04:43

And if you could describe your idea of like the perfect bike ride, the most pleasant bike ride to university, what would it be like?

**Interviewee** 04:54

It would have so the wind would be blowing the right directions and pushes you a little bit towards the campus. Obviously, the weather would be nice. And then yeah, so that I can maybe just wear a light jacket or a sweater don't have to wear like a thick jacket. I think that would be nice. And then also if there's not like that many people cycling because it becomes a little bit stressful at times. → built environment characteristics

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:19

Okay. And what is your favourite part about cycling to uni? So what do you look forward to the most?

**Interviewee** 05:36

Just that I can. I think it's just like I can get a little bit of fresh air before a lecture. Just go outside that I've been outside a little bit, wake up and listen to music and then have a nice bike ride to the unit.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:49

Okay, let's say in Groningen it was as easy for cars and buses and bikes to get from A to B in terms of like time. Would you still choose to ride your bike?

**Interviewee** 06:05

I think I would. But that's just because personal preference I would say is so just because I personally really like to ride a bike, I think I would choose to have a like, use my bike over a car or bus. And also just because it saves you a lot of money, because the bike is just a one time thing, sometimes a little bit of repairs. But the thing that comes to my mind right away is like bus or car. It's quite expensive for internationals who don't have the OB. So I think I would still choose the bike for sure.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:37

And have you experienced any accidents while in cycling? And if so, how those accidents influenced your enjoyment of the activity or just your perception of cycling in general.

**Interviewee** 06:49

I've actually not experienced any. I've also not seen many. I've heard that there's quite a few but I think that because there's such a high amount The cyclists within the city like something's obviously going to happen, but I think that the cars watch out for people. And I think people are very aware of the cycling here. And therefore, I think the accidents stay quite low. So it hasn't really impacted my enjoyment of it.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:17

And do you think cycling has an impact on your fitness?

**Interviewee** 07:22

Yeah, I would think so. So I think that it definitely like this gives you like a little bit of, even if you spend the whole day in the UB or if you spend the whole day at the campus, at least

you get to just have a little bit of exercise and just gets you outside for a little while, instead of just moving from here to the fridge or something. → multifunctionality

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:48

And are there any aspects of cycling that you don't enjoy in particular, or that you like the least?

**Interviewee** 07:56

There's not a lot I think because...yeah, I think it's just it's very convenient. I mean, the weather's obviously sometimes unfortunate, but I think that's an obvious aspect to complain about. I think that there's like, not anything in particular, I would mention.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 08:18

And do you think you're gonna continue cycling to commute when you leave Grunion?

**Interviewee** 08:25

I think that really depends on where I'd move. But depending also on the size of the city and the distances that I'll cover. But I think if it is like somewhere where it's either similar or it's definitely a doable distance, then I will definitely continue cycling. I think it's sort of hadn't left a really good impression on me so far. So I think I've continued with it.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 08:49

So is distance the most important factor for you and just in influencing whether you cycle or not?

**Interviewee** 08:55

I would think so. Okay, especially if you're considering commuting I would say that, like distance would be probably the biggest factor that impacts my decision.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 09:05

What about when you're older? And maybe you have a family? Do you think you will still try and pursue cycling as a main mode of transport?

**Interviewee**

I guess that really depends on what happens. But I mean, I would like to, because I think it's a great way to travel through the city in an environmentally friendly fashion. And also just, the convenience of it is very nice, but obviously, if it's, it comes down to it. Obviously, if there's a car, like if a car makes it a lot easier than then that's going to be

**Greta Jeruseviciute**

Can you give me one thing that you think is a lot better about taking the bike to commute than taking a car?

**Interviewee** 10:02

Yeah, I definitely think it's just the fact that you're able to move and just wake up a little bit and able to just start your day off a little bit fresh instead of getting into the car and then you're driving I think it's just a lot more entertaining to be able to like to be out there than to be stuck in traffic. So I guess it's probably better for mental health because I'm happier.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 10:26

And what about the one thing that's better about a bike rather than public transport?

10:32

Generally, the waiting times, I feel like that, especially in Groningen, when you consider like the buses that go from from the station to Zernike I've heard that there's like hundreds of people waiting for the bus sometimes and it can get quite stressful around like the peak times to get a bus to Zernike. So I think that with a bike like you can just leave whenever you want, and you can go like whenever you want, you don't you're not really stuck to any schedule or anything.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 11:00

Final question concerning safety. Is it an important aspect to consider in whether you enjoy cycling or not?

**Interviewee** 11:14

Yeah, I think I think that's definitely an important aspect because I feel like that's also one thing here in because the cycling culture here is so big, it seems like everyone is watching out for the cyclists. Also, there's a lot of dedicated cycling lanes and just people in general are aware of what's going on and because a lot of other people also cycle it's just there seems to be a general like awareness of cyclists work, which I think in other places you're lacking because there are people are cycling and just people are not aware of it. And that's how accidents happen.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 11:56

So, in general, what do you prefer for commuting?

**Interviewee** 12:05

Think especially by bike here, although, I mean driving your car is fun, but I think in general the overall overall like happiness and just satisfaction is more with biking than taking a car.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 12:23

Um, well, we've come to the end of our interview. I don't really have any more questions to ask. Is there anything that you would like to add about cycling and cycling enjoyment?

**Interviewee** 12:37

No, i think we covered everything.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 12:40

Okay, great. Well, thank you very time.

**Interviewee** 12:43

Yeah, no problem.

Interviewee #6: Cycling Enthusiast

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:01

So Hi, thank you for being here and agreeing to participate in this interview, the topic of our conversation is going to be cycling. And I want to get to know why you enjoy cycling so

much. Essentially, I want to get to know your experience and opinions. And this will be more of a conversation between us. So feel free to express your opinions freely and openly. And if you don't understand a question, don't hesitate to say an hour and I will rephrase. So let's begin with the first question. For what purpose do you normally use your bike?

**Interviewee** 00:33

Normally apart from COVID times, commuting while I was back in Groningen, but right now, mostly for leisure activities

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:50

okay, so before COVID commuting and leisure

**Interviewee** 00:54

Yep.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:55

Okay. And why do you not use another mode of transport to commute in Groningen?

**Interviewee** 01:03

Because the bus is really expensive. That's the first reason. The second reason, which was also the reason why I really started cycling when I was living in Germany is that I'm just much more flexible. I can go anywhere I want, wherever I want and usually it's faster.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:29

Okay, so flexibility, like you can choose your own time and when to when to arrive, things like that?

**Interviewee** 01:36

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:37

Okay. And what was the other one?

**Interviewee** 01:40

Speed. I'm just normally faster on the bike for distances under 10 kilometres. I think there's this one study which says that you are usually faster and in my case it's usually the case, except when I'm here back in Germany, I could take the train and take my bike into the train, but yeah, I think you're focusing on Groningen so it doesn't really matter for you.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:12

Well, what I want to know is why you don't choose a car instead or public transport instead of a bike.

**Interviewee** 02:24

I don't have a car so.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:30

Do you also commute when you're back home in Germany?

**Interviewee** 02:34

No. Why should I? I am mostly visiting friends and going, which was also a reason why I came back here (Germany) was to have the accessibility to the mountains where I can then take my mountain bike and cycle there in the mountains, which is a bit more interesting than holding our landscape for mountain biking.

**Greta Jeruseviciute**

My question was more like, when you lived back home did you use your bike to commute to school?

**Interviewee**

Yeah, I think that's how it all started. Yeah, I could be at home for I don't know 15 to 20 minutes longer if I was biking instead of taking the bus since I'm living in a village outside of the city. So then I really started cycling because I could sleep longer.

**Greta Jeruseviciute 03:39**

Okay, I was gonna ask if cycling something you've done since you were little or is it something that you started doing later in life?

**Interviewee 03:48**

I think it was fifth grade. So fifth grade, I was nine, something like this no, 10 Wait, around this age.

**Greta Jeruseviciute 03:58**

And what made you start cycling? Was it literally the fact that it was quicker the quickest way?

**Interviewee 04:06**

And yeah, it was quicker. And it back in primary school it was just cool to cycle as well. Yeah. I started cycling when I was four, that's when I got my first bike. And I spent many afternoons just cycling around the village with a friend. That was our thing to do. And then we also were like in a gang of five. We're cycling through the streets. Yeah. Yeah, no, that's where the initial steps of cycling but then yeah, turned more. Yeah. Okay. It's faster. So, I haven't like Why shouldn't I use a bike?

**Greta Jeruseviciute 04:45**

So you're just used to doing it right now. Um, what aspects of riding your bike, more so to commute, do you enjoy the most?

**Interviewee 05:00**

That's a good question. What I liked the most...you have a certain form of exercise and you're also on your own. So it's a bit meditative that you can just zone out for 20 minutes and then be at your next spot. While I don't know if you're in a bus, you can't zone out that much. Or in a car if you're commuting inside of a city. → mild exercise; no socialising “me time”; relaxing, meditative

**Greta Jeruseviciute 05:33**

Yeah, because you have to be super aware of like other cars and obviously, yeah, things like that?

**Interviewee 05:38**

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:38

Do you find cycling or bike calming for yourself?

**Interviewee** 05:43

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:44

Well, because you said you enjoy, like the aspect of cycling alone, do you also enjoy cycling with other people? Do you enjoy the social aspect of it as well?

**Interviewee** 05:54

Yes. When I'm here, and especially mountain biking for leisure activities, it's also quite nice to cycle with some friends or I don't know my brother's.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:08

Do you ever take specific routes when you commute to university to increase your enjoyment of the cycle?

**Interviewee** 06:19

Not really. In Groningen not, it's just that I have the specific routes which are the fastest depending on the there is only one traffic light no yeah there's only these two no there is no traffic lights. So that's how I figured out how I can be the fastest to university.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:41

So for you, the the quicker the route the more enjoyable the route?

**Interviewee** 06:49

I think if there would be the possibility to cycle along channel I would maybe take it but since there's not really this possibility without taking a big detour...

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:07

So do you think if you got to cycle through like a park or a really nice natural area, do you think that would make your cycle ride more enjoyable?

**Interviewee** 07:16

Yep. I have the direct comparison. So when I was second to secondary school here in Germany, I had the option to cycle and it was a minute faster to go through the industrial centre, but I always took the route through the forest, for instance.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:33

okay. Yeah. Okay. Um, let's say that in Groningen, it was just as fast to get from A to B, with cycling with bus with car. They were all as efficient, would you still choose bike?

**Interviewee** 07:52

Yeah, because in the end, even if we also would say the costs would be the same I would still use the bike because it's nice to be outside. Yeah, sometimes if it's raining it, you may be thinking a oh man. Why am I cycling right now, but then I don't really mind if it's raining, to be honest.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 08:18

Do you think the fact that Groningen has such a strong bicycle culture plays a part in your enjoyment of cycling here?

**Interviewee** 08:32

Yes, sometimes yes, sometimes no. Because sometimes there are too many these bicycles on the road that you're getting into traffic. And then, yeah, and also the infrastructure is so good, that it's getting a bit annoying sometimes or a bit boring. → boring for cyclist enthusiasts

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 08:49

The infrastructure?

08:50

It's so good that you don't have to cycle around cars and there's not an adrenaline rush I get when I come here into city

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 08:59

Oh, So for you the infrastructure is almost too perfect?

**Interviewee** 09:05

Yep. I think also if you're going to talk to Constantine he is also going to say that's all if you asked him about it, he we already talked about it and I think Fabio as well. In the end, it's better that you have this great infrastructure and then you can always cycle safe but yeah, if you can also then get the kick of going through traffic that's also sometimes fun.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 10:02

Yeah. Um, could you describe your perfect, most enjoyable cycle commute to university?

**Interviewee** 10:12

I would say it's usually it really depends on the weather. If it's nice weather outside, you don't need a jacket or something like this then. And then there if there is no traffic, so if you have a 10 o'clock meeting or something like this, and not a nine o'clock where you get the traffic so it's nice when you can kind of cycle from A to B non stop. → maintenance of constant flow

**Greta Jeruseviciute**

Do you use your commute to think about anything or do something nice for yourself?

**Interviewee** 11:01

Depends. Sometimes I'm listening to music or podcasts. Sometimes if it's nice weather outside, then I'm sometimes not putting on my headphones because the you also want to experience the nice weather and a nice commute a bit more. But yeah, it really depends on the day → "experience" the nice weather, not just observe it

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 11:23

Um, what do you look forward to the most when you set off for your commute?

**Interviewee** 11:33

I think I actively never think about this. Most of the time, it's the destination.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 11:43

So for you, it's like just getting there?

**Interviewee** 11:47

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 11:48

You don't really look forward to any aspects of cycling?

**Interviewee** 11:59

I don't know. Sometimes yes but mostly it's it's getting back from a lecture. Then getting back and having this pause, I don't know if I have been going directly to the library or if I know I need to do stuff at home.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 12:25

You mentioned before something about cycling being like a certain type of exercise? I'm not exactly sure you called it like a specific exercise. What do you mean by like cycling being a certain type of exercise?

**Interviewee** 12:45

That you move around a bit. Yeah, it's not really sports, but it's not being inactive.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 12:56

Oh, it's like moderate exercise?

**Interviewee** 12:59

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:03

So what is like the main thing you think is better about commuting with a bike than commuting with a car? The main thing that makes it more enjoyable to cycle than to take a car.

**Interviewee** 13:20

I would say for me it's faster but there are also underlying reasons. It's more environmentally friendly. I think it's also good for your health. Not only physically but also mentally it helps you. Yeah, reasons like those.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:41

Right. And the one thing that's better about cycling than taking the bus?

**Interviewee** 13:49

It's cheaper.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:52

Fair enough. Um, do you think you're going to continue cycling to commute when you leave Groningen?

**Interviewee** 14:01

Yes.



**Greta Jeruseviciute** 14:02

Are there any other any factors that would prevent you from cycling?

**Interviewee** 14:10

If I would move to a city where it's just not possible or to unsecure. When I was, for instance, living in Mexico City, my flatmate was cycling. He was cycling through an area which was rather **safe**, but for me to uni, it was longer, much more insecure. And you would also be exposed more to polluted air so it didn't really make sense.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 14:37

Okay, when you say unsecure, you mean there wasn't any infrastructure that was safe or?

**Interviewee** 14:45

Not that much infrastructure in Groningen, especially, people are really used to the fact that there could be a cyclist coming around the corner at anytime. And I know in Mexico there is no one expects cyclists on the road.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 15:01

Nobody considers cyclists as being part of the traffic?

**Interviewee** 15:05

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 15:06

Do you think it's nice here in Groningen, do you think it makes cycling more enjoyable? The fact that cyclists are considered a lot and they're looked out for?

**Interviewee** 15:16

Yes. It's amazing that you can reach every destination in the city, buy only a maximum half an hour on the bike. And if you take a car you need, at least the same time. And I think also the social pressure that you need to have a bike to move around, especially as a student...It's also in the end the benefit for the whole vibe of the city because you never, you're never on a street where you think there's no one around because you see always students zooming around on their bikes.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 15:54

Do you think the fact that it's predominantly cyclists in the city, do you think it affects how you perceive the city yourself?

**Interviewee** 16:05

Yes. I think every mode of transport lets you perceive the city in a different way. Yeah, when the whole lockdown started, and the only thing I could do was go to the supermarket and go running. I was walking much more than before that I didn't know the part of town I was living in, from this perspective, only from the perspective of a bike. So I think it really has an influence.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 16:38

You can probably take in more of your surroundings if you're cycling than if you're driving a car.

**Interviewee** 16:44

Yes, but you also are more aware of your surroundings if you're walking instead of cycling.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 16:50

So we've come to the end of our interview. If you could sum up like your top three things, that would make cycling so enjoyable. What would they be?

**Interviewee** 17:04

It's faster. It's also fun and environmentally friendly. And I don't know. Yeah, I think that's it.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 17:14

Would you define yourself as a cyclist?

**Interviewee** 17:19

Yes.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 17:20

And why would you identify as a cyclist?

**Interviewee** 17:23

I think because I've been doing it for so long. And I was. I know, I always like this and I spent quite a lot of time on my bike. So...

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 17:37

So it's just like an activity you sort of intrinsically love to do?

**Interviewee** 17:41

Yeah. Okay. Well, I got used to do over the years.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 17:46

Okay. Yeah. Um, well, I have no more questions to ask. Is there anything that you would like to add about cycling and enjoyment?

**Interviewee** 17:56

Not really, I think it was quite in depth already. Okay,

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 17:59

well Perfect, thank you so much.

**Interviewee** 18:01

No worries.

*Interviewee #7: Cycling enthusiast*

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:01

So Hello, thank you for being here. And for agreeing to participate in this interview, the topic of our conversation will be cycling. And I want to get to know your experience and opinions on it. So this will be more of a conversation between us rather than an interrogation. Say I feel free to express your opinions and whatever you want freely. If you don't understand a

question, don't hesitate to say so and I will rephrase it. So let's begin with the first question. Um, for what purpose do you normally use your bike for?

**Interviewee** 00:39

Well, mostly for commuting from my house to university or to the library. Plus, I really enjoy cycling so I actually have a good bike too, that I use for longer rides outside the city, like on the weekends.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:00

And how come you do not use another mode of transport to commute?

**Interviewee** 01:07

Um, well, mostly, it's the cheapest. Cycling is the cheapest mode of transport in my opinion. **And I also enjoy it as I really enjoy cycling**, I mean, when I'm going to school, I really don't feel like you know closing in a bus or Yeah, I mean, it's really better to for me to take some fresh air and just cycle to to uni **plus i think that here in Groningen, facilities are very good for cyclists so why not? Why not? Take advantage of them.**--> closed off in bus, fresh air (sensory)

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:56

So you enjoy the fresh air aspect of Cycling like being outside and also the infrastructure?

**Interviewee** 02:05

Yeah. It's so good that it invites you to, to cycle I think so yeah, the fresh air. I mean, I'd much rather have a bike ride to uni then again being closed in a bus, **with a lot of other people and yeah.** → social overstimulation?

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:27

Um, and also do you cycle anywhere else apart from Groningen?

**Interviewee** 02:38

You mean for commuting or for recreational purposes?

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:43

Mostly for commuting.

**Interviewee** 02:47

I mean, I used to cycle. When I was in high school, I used to go to school by bike too, again because **I really enjoyed it and it was also the cheapest way of transport even though like infrastructures there were not so good.** Yeah, when I go back home, I still bike in an urban environment, let's say for shorter distances like I don't know, I would say one or two kilometres, but if I have to be honest if it gets longer I just take the car. It's because it's just easier to take the car. I'm also lazy I don't know.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:49

So you do commute back home?

**Interviewee** 03:53

Yeah, yeah. I mean, if I have to do some do some stuff. Yeah, I mean, my main commute is here in Groningen. But yeah, I also if I go back at home, I often have to run errands, go here go there. So yes.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 04:11

Would you say you find it as enjoyable to cycle back home as it is in Groningen for you?

**Interviewee** 04:17

No, no, I would say less. I'm from Italy. And I think over there, at least in my area, it's quite dangerous, I would say, and infrastructures are not so good. So you're just cycling on the road with with all the cars. Plus, also I had many experiences of stolen bikes. So that makes it even less enjoyable because you're always afraid that you might not find your bike again. I mean that happens here in the Groningen too but I think it's more frequent back in Italy. I would say it's more enjoyable here. Also just because everyone else is doing it so if I do it alone you kind of look like the weird one the outsider while everyone is doing it here, so yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:39

So would you say the strong bicycle culture that's present in Groningen influences your enjoyment of cycling?

**Interviewee** 05:52

Well, I mean, indirectly in the sense that since there is a I mean, I don't know which is the cause and which is the effect, but since there is a strong cycling culture, infrastructures are very good. And therefore Yes, it's very pleasant to to ride a bicycle and it's really enjoyable rather than dangerous or scary.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:23

I'm a part of like the bicycle culture here in Groningen is that a lot of times you see people cycling together? Is the social aspect of cycling something that you particularly enjoy?

**Interviewee** 06:39

Ah, no, I think that if i'm commuting then...yeah, actually, I mean, sometimes i cycle with my friends on the way. So that of course is a plus I really like that. Otherwise, sometimes, you know, I also really enjoy, like going on my own with music in my ears. And that's enjoyable, too. So yeah, I would say that overall cycling is also pleasant in a social way.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:27

With cycling you can have both. It can be very social, or it can be something you do like independently.

**Interviewee** 07:35

Exactly. Yeah, you can you can choose... I mean, I think that the main word to describe this is just independency, like having a bike gives you independency So, you are not dependent on public transport, not dependent on a car with its costs or something. And also, yeah, you can go wherever you want, do whatever you want if you wanna go with your friend you can cycle together and it can be a you know, a group commute while if you want to go on your own you can do that. So yeah, I would say that the best words to describe this is independency.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 08:18

Okay, perfect. Do you ever take specific routes when you commute to increase the enjoyment of your cycling trip?

**Interviewee** 08:40

Um, yeah, I mean, I follow the main cycling infrastructure route. So that, you know, I have less contact with car, its just safe. I mean other than that I usually, I privilege the safe cycling paths. But other than that, I just think the fastest way to to commute but that is also because I also ride for recreational purposes sometimes so in that case yeah then I just go to nice places. But I will say for commuting, mostly it's about infrastructure like I follow the cycling route and I just take usually the fastest route.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 09:49

So for you greenery, or scenery doesn't really have a huge part to play in your cycling, satisfaction (for commuting)?

**Interviewee** 10:03

I mean, how can i say...if I happen to cycle through a park or to or through green areas and blue areas, then I really enjoyed that but let's say that I wouldn't change my route to cycle

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:01

Um, so if you could describe your idea of a perfect, the most enjoyable bicycle ride to university, what would it entail?

**Interviewee** 00:16

Not much traffic, also in terms of bikes, I mean if there are many bikes of course it's more stressful and, yeah, so the less bikes and less cars...intersection... possible...

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:42

Can you repeat that again please?

**Interviewee** 00:46

So less bikes around and also like, interaction with cars on the intersections or on the road. Yeah, and maybe cycling in a park or along the water that is a plus of course, yeah, that's really enjoyable.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:20

Okay. And what is your favourite thing about cycling to uni? What do you look forward to when, you know, you're about to go to uni? What is your favourite part about the commute?

**Interviewee** 01:37

I would say...hm, good question. I would say relaxing. It's for me a way to mentally relax and also kind of freshen up. So yeah, for example, just like listening to my music, and it's for me, it's a time in which I can just listen to my music or some podcasts. And just, you know, do that without having to do anything else in the sense, I'm just like, you know, cycling and listening to music for me that's quite relaxing. So yeah, that's what I'm looking for. It's a it's a way to mentally relax, let's say, if that makes sense. → relaxing

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:35

Yeah. So it's like meditation, in a way, for your mind.

**Interviewee** 02:40

Kind of yeah, I mean, you know, to ease your mind. If you've been studying all day or something like that. Then it's just those like 15 or 20 minutes in which you're just like "Ah, no, let's take some fresh air. Let's listen to some music"...

**Greta Jeruseviciute**

Do you think you can get the same type of mental relaxation that you get on your bike if you were to ride a car or take the bus?

**Interviewee**

Uh, no, I don't think so. Again, like, I really also value the part of getting some fresh air. So yeah, I think that it would be way more stressful to get up. I mean a car because then it's just, I mean, especially in the city here, it would be very difficult and also because I think that then you have to run to the bus, check the times, then, you know, there's a lot of other people... no, I think it would be way less enjoyable.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:50

Okay. Um, is the physical aspect of cycling also something that you enjoy?

**Interviewee** 03:57

Yeah. I see it as a good way to stay healthy and do some exercise. So yeah, definitely.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 04:10

Um, okay, so now switching around the topic of question, what aspects - if there's any - would you say you like the least?

**Interviewee** 04:25

Well, of course, that kind of depends on the weather because sometimes when the weather conditions are bad, which happens can happen quite often here in Groningen that's very not much enjoyable. So wind and rain and very cold weather. Other than that, yeah, I would say like other bikes or having to pay attention for what other people are doing, other bikes... so yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:18

But does the bad weather influence your decision to cycle? So if it's raining and cold outside would you still cycle?

**Interviewee** 05:28

Yes I still cycle because it would be even more effort to go take the bus and yeah, and also I just dress appropriately and cycle. Also again, its the cheapest way and the easiest way and the fastest way so yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:56

Would you consider yourself a cyclist?

**Interviewee** 05:59

Sorry?

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:59

Would you consider yourself a cyclist?

**Interviewee** 06:03

Yes, yes. That also because I ride bikes for recreational purposes. So I just really enjoy doing that. So yeah, I will define myself so.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:16

So for you then, cycling is almost like this intrinsic love you just love the activity itself it seems?

**Interviewee** 06:23

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:25

Let's say it was as easy for cars to get to uni with a car or bus as it is with a bike (timewise) would you still cycle?

**Interviewee** 06:46

I think so. Yeah, I think that would fit a cycle I really enjoy. Again the the physical activity aspect and the as I said before getting some fresh air So yeah, I would, I would still cycle.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:04

Um, do you think you're gonna still cycle to commute when you leave Groningen?

**Interviewee** 07:10

If I can, yes. If it's in a doable distance and everything, yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:23

And like when you're older? When you get a job and you know, maybe you live in a big city or wherever you will live, do you think you're still going to continue to commute throughout your life?

**Interviewee** 07:38

I mean, well, I mean, I think that I will still enjoy that. But I would probably, if I had the opportunity, maybe switch to a car if possible. Otherwise, I really value my independency as I said before, so I think that the alternative would be a car if there is the possibility, but I think I would still prefer to bike over having to take public public transport.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 08:24

Okay. So if you can give me one reason why you think Cycling is better than a car. What would it be? Or two reasons.

**Interviewee** 08:45

Very simply, it's like money wise, I think it saves a lot of money having a bike rather than paying a car. But also physical activity, I would say either helps you with that.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 09:08

Okay. And what about what's better about taking a bike than taking a bus?

**Interviewee** 09:17

Again, I would say, the physical activity aspect. And also, again, the independency. I say you can just leave at whatever time you want to leave. You are not bounded to other times. And, yeah, again, it's more relaxing, in my opinion.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 09:42

Okay. Well, we've come to the end of the interview. I have no more questions I want to ask. Is there anything that you'd want to add?

**Interviewee** 09:53

No, I think it was quite complete.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 09:55

Yeah. Okay. Well, yeah, this interview was actually perfect. So again, thank you so much.

**Interviewee** 10:03

You're very welcome. My pleasure.

Interviewee #8: Regular cyclist

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:01

So thank you for being here and agreeing to participate in this interview, the topic of our conversation will be cycling and I want to get to know your experience and opinions. So this will be more like a conversation between us rather than an interrogation. Feel free to express your opinions freely and openly. And if you don't understand a question, don't hesitate to say and I will rephrase it. So let's begin the first question. For what purpose do you normally use your bike for?

**Interviewee** 00:28

I always use it to go to uni. So that's the main purpose I would say, I go, I drive to uni and back, and then I also go to the supermarket. I go to the park, I go to the gym. Basically, Everywhere I go, I go by bike,

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:45

Um, and why not use another mode of transport to get around or to commute?

**Interviewee** 00:53

I feel like it's the easiest way like you are in control of your own time. Right. So Especially where I live, there aren't that many bus connections. So it's easier to just go by bike. And yeah, it's faster as well. Plus, even though I mean when it's raining, it's not as nice but when it's not raining, it's so great pleasant thing to do. → Commuting control, weather, pleasant activity (affective)

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:21

Do cycle anywhere else apart from Groningen to commute, specifically? Yeah. Or to get around, for example, when you're back home?

**Interviewee** 01:37

Well, where I live back home, it's like, lots of mountains. So we do ride our bikes, but it's mainly just to go like on an excursion like trips. You wouldn't really use it to get around.



**Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:54

Okay, and so would you say that like the terrain is the main thing that prevents you from using your bike to commute?

**Interviewee** 02:01

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:03

And what aspect of riding your bike - mainly to commute - do you enjoy the most?

**Interviewee** 02:10

Um, I feel like it's calming, like just riding your bike wherever you go. If it's a longer distance especially, it's just a very calming experience. Like you're just riding your bike. And breathing in fresh air.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:28

Do you think like if Groningen was designed in such a way that it was as easy to take the car to university in terms of like distance, would you still prefer to take your bike?

**Interviewee** 02:42

Yes, I would say so. Because Well, first of all, I'm a student. So I don't really have the money to afford a car. But also in terms of sustainability, I think unless I had like, an electric car, which obviously would be more expensive...I just prefer the bike. Because it's aligned with my values. So it's like... → identity + values + environment

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:06

So environmental reasons are the main reasons. Okay.

**Interviewee** 03:11

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:11

Do you ever take specific routes when you go to uni to increase the enjoyment of your commute?

**Interviewee** 03:20

Um, sometimes Yeah, I can go through the park, which takes a little bit longer, but sometimes just for the fun, I just go through the park, because otherwise it's just boring.

**Greta Jeruseviciute**

Do you enjoy like looking at the trees and the scenery and nature things like that?

**Interviewee**

So much! I get really distracted. I'm just like, staring on the side and then yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 03:47

And what about the social aspect of cycling? Is that something that you particularly enjoy?

**Interviewee** 04:00

Yeah, I love that. Yeah, that's something that I'm really, really like, I feel like it's one of the things that only happens in the Netherlands because I had never done that in Spain before. Like you don't cycle around with friends. Um, but it's just so nice to instead of going on a walk with someone, you just take your bike and ride together and you talk and if you're tired just like hang on to someone else, and then they pull you and yeah, it's just really nice.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 04:35

What about like the physical aspect of cycling? Do you ever use it to get more fit?

**Interviewee** 04:45

Generally I don't just because I use it so often. So when I do want to exercise I want to do something different.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 04:54

Okay.

**Interviewee** 04:55

My bike is not the... you know, that kind of bike that...what's it called?

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:01

Like, like a racing bike?

**Interviewee** 05:02

Yeah like a racing bike. So it's just like a normal...yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:09

So like the fitness aspect, the movement you get from riding a bike is not something that makes you particularly enjoy riding a bike.

**Interviewee** 05:17

Um, it does as well it's just not the main thing I would say. Because I exercise anyway.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:33

If you could describe your perfect perfect commute to uni (cycle commute), what would it entail?

**Interviewee** 05:44

Um, parks definitely parks. And also like, I noticed that the bike paths right now like the way that I take to uni is like super, super thick. Like there's barely any space for bikes, which is weird. But yeah, then there's lots of buses like coming by really fast. And it's just not so comfortable. So ideally, I would have like a wider path. Plenty of trees and nature from the side. Um, yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:21

Is infrastructure then important for you? In terms of like enjoying cycling or not, for example, Groningen and has pretty amazing cycling infrastructure, the culture is very present...

**Interviewee** 06:35

Definitely. Yeah. Because if what I'm seeing is ugly, or if I don't like what I'm seeing, you know, for whatever reason, I'm obviously not going to enjoy it as much.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:47

Okay. Um, what do you look forward to the most when you set off in your commute?

**Interviewee** 06:55

That's a good question. It depends. Probably, I think I enjoy the ride there. But I'm probably looking forward to the event itself. Most of you know what I mean? Because Yeah, it's the goal, like, you take the bike to go somewhere to do something.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:18

So when you say the 'event' do you mean you look forward to getting to the end destination most?

**Interviewee** 07:24

Yeah. Unless it's like a special place. So for example, I went to the Botanical Garden in Harren, which is only like a 20 minute bike ride from the city. And I actually really, really enjoyed the ride itself, like not, obviously the place the destination too, but because it was like full of nature and animals and things on the way so it's exciting. Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:59

So When you go to uni, there's nothing in particular about like your actual bike ride that you enjoy?

**Interviewee** 08:19

Yes, sometimes I listen to podcasts, so that's really interesting. And I know I used to do this last year not anymore, but I used to learn Chinese on my way to uni on the bike. So yeah, podcasts and music is also nice, but usually I'm in a rush. And I've got to like bike really fast to get to uni.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 08:44

Okay. Well, okay, well, if you could sum up, what are your top three favourite things about cycling to commute?

**Interviewee** 08:53

Okay. I think cycling with other people, just like, yeah. Because I just love that, it's so very nice experience. And then also being able to observe everything around you like scenery and listening to the birds. Just nature related stuff. Um, and then the fact that it's a really sustainable way of moving around. → socialising, scenery (sensory), values/sustainability

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 09:25

Great. Um, and what are some things - if there's anything - about cycling that you don't particularly enjoy?

**Interviewee** 09:35

I don't like cycling when the weather is really bad. So like, when it's super windy, and the wind is against you, and it's raining, hailing... but that's something you can't really avoid in this country. So yeah. Other than that, hmm, I mean, I get a bit tired, a bit out of breath, if I'm gonna rush it.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 10:01

Totally understandable.

**Interviewee** 10:04

But yeah, it's, I love it. I love cycling. It's it's really great. I wish more countries did that as well.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 10:12

Do you think the fact that it's so like not just in Groningen but in the Netherlands in general, the fact that so many people cycle here and it's in the culture, do you think that makes you enjoy it more?

**Interviewee** 10:26

I think it makes you try it sure cause I know there's lots of people like Asian people mostly who have never even ridden a bike. So it first of all makes you try it because everyone does it. And then you realise Oh, it's actually quite a good idea to do this, you know? Okay, and I think you you can learn to enjoy it even if you didn't to begin with.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 10:56

Do you think you'll continue cycling to commute when you leave Groningen?

**Interviewee** 11:03

Yes, because when I leave Groningen, I'll move to the Hague. So it's still the Netherlands. But if it was in Spain...it's just tricky because of the, you know, the train. But I definitely like riding more now that I've lived in the Netherlands. And I take my bike like I ride my bike more often in Spain, because of it.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 11:30

Okay. It's kind of like becoming a part of you, ingrained.

**Interviewee** 11:35

Yeah. Exactly!

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 11:37

Okay. Well, we've come to the end of our interview. I don't really have any more questions to ask. Is there anything that you'd like to add about cycling and enjoying the activity.

**Interviewee** 12:03

I mean, I think the weather plays a really big role. But then again, I've also had bike rides, where it's like, pouring, and I actually really enjoyed it just because it's so peaceful to be getting like soaked and you're just cycling alone. So I don't know, just depends on my mood as well.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 12:27

Okay. Do you think you'd be able to say that about like, a, I don't know if you've ever driven a car. But do you think you'd be able to say that about a car or public transport in terms of being peaceful and like mentally relaxing?

**Interviewee** 12:42

Actually, that's a really great point, and no, I don't think so. I think that's just something you get from the bike. It's a similar experience to walking I guess like because when you go for a

walk, it's like more calming that we take the call or if you go by bus or any other means transport. I think it's more stressful.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:04

Yeah, I understand why probably because like in the car you have to like, look out for everything in the road and at the same time control the car. When you're cycling you don't have to be as aware of all of your surroundings.

**Interviewee** 13:21

Yeah. You don't have to pay as much attention.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:25

Yeah, essentially. Um, so yeah, that's it. Thank you.

**Interviewee** 13:31

Thank you.

**Interviewee #9: Regular cyclist**

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 00:02

Hi, thank you for being here and for agreeing to participate in this interview. So the topic of our conversation will be cycling. And I want to get to know your experience and opinions on it. So this will be more like a conversation between us rather than an interrogation. Therefore, feel free to express your opinions freely and openly. And if you don't understand a question, don't hesitate to say and I will rephrase it. So let's begin with the first question. So for what purpose do you normally use your bike for?

**Interviewee** 00:43

Like just general transportation between daily tasks so to the store or to university or to training or meetings with people, seeing people. So you just like general commuting. I basically bike everywhere. Basically Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 01:03

And why not use another mode of transport such as car bus?

**Interviewee** 01:10

I don't have a car because I don't have the money for a car. And I don't think it's like useful to have it in Groningen either because you can't like get that many places **like, easily in the middle of like, in town or in the city centre**. And like, I don't know, I'm not that like I feel like the bus is just unnecessarily expensive or something for take the bus every day for example, and like I enjoy the cycling as well. So I enjoy cycling to university in the morning because it's like kind of wakes me up and stuff and I think like if I would just take the bus that I wouldn't have an also I'm not that good at like being on time or anything. So I think If I had to, like rely on like the time that the bus leaves or something, I would like miss the bus a lot. While if I bike and just go whenever I want, or whenever I'm leaving, like, yeah. → wake up affect + independence

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:17

So you think with a bike, you're able to control your arrival time and your commute better?

**Interviewee** 02:23

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:27

Do you cycle to commute anywhere else apart from Groningen?

02:34

Not really. No, because I don't really have anywhere else to go. Except.... Like the only other place I would like, most of my life like is in Groningen, basically, and if I want to see family or friends, or anything that's like in Amsterdam, I don't really cycle like to Amsterdam.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 02:54

My question was when you were back home, did you also commute by bike?

**Interviewee** 03:10

I don't really do that anymore I did before because like the people that I hang out with here they live like really, really close by, like almost my neighbours so I can just walk there and also like my parents have a car so it's just easier and since Norway is like, with all the hills and everything like so I think like takes more time is more like Cycling is less like the municipalities that they have made. They're like no real cycle past here and stuff like that, so like in Groningen is like really good cycle because they have like cycle paths and it's really easy and they have like spaces outside of the store to park your bike and everything. While here it's not really a thing like not that many people cycle.

04:02

So would you say that you find cycling in Norway not as enjoyable as in Groningen.

04:08

Um, I think I find it like as an enjoyable just not as convenient. But I still enjoy cycling but it's just not as convenient and okay, so that kind of makes it less enjoyable. Yes, but I think the main part is the convenience of it. → infrastructure very minor role in enjoyment

04:26

Okay, so if you couldn't pick out your three favourite or what is it about cycling in Groningen that makes you enjoy it so much.

**Interviewee** 04:39

It's fast because I really like like, getting places fast. And also I just enjoy like cycling fast overall. I like the like the kind of the exercise part of it like that you actually move and then you use your legs or something. Not only slow walking, you know, you can actually just Yeah, feel like you're actually doing something. And I think the convenience is really nice in Groningen, it's just like really easy to, like in Groningen everything is so close by like, I think that's it has to do with like the size of Groningen as well, but like, I don't I don't mind cycling for 15 minutes and in 15 minutes you can get like basically anywhere. Yeah. Like I think if I would like live in Amsterdam or something I would like have to cycle for 40 minutes. I wouldn't like do it as often. It would not be as convenient.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:31

So distance plays a large role in your cycling enjoyment?

**Interviewee** 05:37

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 05:38

Um, do you ever take specific routes to increase your enjoyment of the cycle ride?

**Interviewee** 05:51

I mostly just take convenient routes like that are just like easier but If, like I take, I'm mostly if I'm going somewhere and I have not been there before, like I'd rather just take like a road that I know like if I know how to if I know how to get from not I don't know how to get from A to B but I know how to go from A to C and from C to be like I go by B because that's just easier for me because I don't enjoy having to look up where I have to go all the time. So I mostly like I enjoy more just taking the roads that I know. And I often like sometimes like if I if I can like a cycle on concrete or asphalt or something like that instead of like bricks I sometimes do that as well because it's just less like bumpy and shaky and stuff because i have a bike with small, really thin tires that are more affected by the ground. → terrain texture

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 06:59

So smooth terrain makes your cycling trip more pleasurable?

**Interviewee** 07:06

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 07:10

Because Groningen has a very strong bicycle culture and a lot of people cycle here, would you say it influences your enjoyment of cycling? The fact that pretty much everyone else does it?

**Interviewee** 07:25

I think Yeah, because I enjoy that they have like, made us many bike paths and like made the whole city centre really convenient for bikes. And I think you wouldn't have that if not everyone would be cycling like the fact that so many people cycle means that the municipalities have to take that into account when they like plan, new roads....they build a forum with a huge bicycle parking garage under it for like all the bikes and that's like really nice I guess especially I enjoyed that because I have like a more special bike that maybe is like more attractive for like people to steal and stuff. So I really enjoy that I can like for example park my bike there where it's like guarded and stuff.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 08:17

Do you think you would still cycle here if it wasn't as big of a thing?

**Interviewee** 08:26

I think it depends on like, what else would there be to offer? Like if the if there would be like trams or like a metro or something like that that would like public transport or something that would be like different than maybe I would be like more attracted to do that, like take public transport instead...okay so if there was more public transport maybe because now they really made like the opportunity to cycle really good but to public transports still like decent but if there would be like more different types of public transport like a FastTram, no like a metro something that would like get you quickly to like Zernike or something and stuff like that

instead of like bike paths, then of course I think I might be like more attracted to do that. But like before I moved to Groningen or before High School I was always cycled to school, instead of like taking the bus and stuff like many of my friends did. So it's still normal for me to go cycling because it's just like convenient and easy, but I think I would definitely do it less if there weren't like as many bike paths and everything, but I think I would still like cycle like on a daily basis maybe.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 09:57

Okay, so having a lot of other people who do it and having the right infrastructure in place makes you more inclined to cycle and therefore it makes it more enjoyable?

**Interviewee** 10:08

Yeah.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 10:09

And what about the aspect of safety? Does that also influence enjoyability?

**Interviewee** 10:16

Well, I don't know if I'm like the safest cyclists out there because I always cycle really fast and stuff like that but I feel like I know what I'm doing. Because I've grown up with cycling and I've always done it and I have really control over my bike and stuff. So if I like pass someone really fast or something like I feel like I know what I'm doing but I get annoyed by these people that don't know how to cycle and cycle in the middle of the road and stuff like that. I find I find that like **unsafe** when they like. Yeah, when they just don't cycle like on the side don't keep their side when they suddenly just take a turn to left without putting their hand out or if you ring your bell and they don't pass or they don't go to the side or something like that, like, small things like that, people who don't know the general rules around cycling. If they don't follow those that I'm like, then I get really annoyed and, yeah. But I think that's more because, of course, it feels like kind of dangerous but I think like that's more because I find them to be in the way of me, not that I find it unsafe.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 11:33

Do you feel like they obstruct traffic flow? Like you prevent you from cycling smoothly?

**Interviewee** 11:39

I do, yeah. And especially with like a road crossing, sometimes you have like people that wait like super long to cross the road and especially when I'm in a hurry, I'm like, dude, there's like plenty of space for you to cross roll before this car gets here. And they like, don't go like stuff like that I find really annoying because especially like, if you cycle from starting....stuff like that and then they kind of stop the whole cycling traffic when they just could have gone just because they're like, a little bit afraid.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 12:28

Do you think that in general grown people in Groningen have a good awareness of cycling manners?

**Interviewee** 12:39

I think I think in general, yeah. Especially if you compare to Norway, for example. **I think it's better in the Netherlands in general. Yeah. Because people do it just more frequently, so they're way more used to it and people, for example, in Norway or other places, which means**



that they adapt more to the cycling lifestyle I would say and take cyclists into account in traffic and infrastructure. → cycling culture

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 13:12

Apart from the annoying people who obstruct traffic flow because they don't pay attention to cycling rules are there any other aspects of cycling that you don't particularly enjoy?

**Interviewee** 13:30

Maintaining my bike. Cause a lot of bikes have these protective covers surround the chains and stuff like that and just have like back or brake so they're like they don't need as much maintenance. But those bikes also come with like, cons as well for like speed for example, stuff like that. So like I have a bike that I enjoy a lot more in like the terms of actually cycling with it, but like, it needs more maintenance than like a normal bike. Okay, sometimes I find that annoying because it's like not that something like I do on a regular basis so I'm always like " i have to get new break blocks, I have to clean my bike I have to oil my chain" stuff like that, you know, those are just things that I, I always think that I need to do when I'm cycling, but when I'm home, it just goes out of my mind and I dont think about it anymore, you know?

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 14:36

But those things don't seem to prevent you from still cycling and enjoying it?

**Interviewee** 14:43

No. Unless like it breaks or I have a flat tire or something. I'm usually like trying to fix it really fast.

14:53

Would you identify yourself as a cyclist?

**Interviewee** 14:56

I would, yes. → identity

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 14:58

And why would you identify as such?

**Interviewee** 15:01

Because cycling is absolutely my main and favourite mode of transport, like, I think like 80% of the time I go anywhere, it's like. So it's like if I'm going somewhere, most of the time It's not even a question if we're going by bike or if we're going to walk o is it car or bus...? It's just like immediately of course we're going to bike you know.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 15:28

Do you think you're going to continue cycling when you leave Groningen?

**Interviewee** 15:32

I think it depends on where I go. Okay, I think I would definitely continue cycling if it's somehow convenient, like if you get there a lot faster. Like the main reason I bike is because I think walking is too slow, because I do a lot of things during the day so I just don't want to spend all my time travelling there. So I think it depends, but in Oslo for example a lot of my friends don't cycle because you can just take the metro and it's way faster because you don't

have to cycle up the hills and there are no like real streets for cycles that are like safe. So I think if I moved to a city like Oslo for example I would still cycle a bit but I think I definitely would cycle less.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 16:27

Okay. So for you distance has probably a bigger role to play in cycling enjoyment than fresh air for example. If it's shorter to travel by car you would choose car or bus?

**Interviewee** 16:47

Depends how much shorter, if it's like 20 minutes by car like an hour by bike then I would try to take the car, but if it's like 30 minutes by bike and like 20 minutes by car i would bike. If it was like raining really much or like really strong wind I would take the car as well.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 17:21

Can you give me one thing that's in your opinion a lot better about cycling to commute than taking the car to commute?

**Interviewee** 17:31

I think the exercise of it, like just to move just a little bit. Like I really notice that in the last part of February or in January, February (last part of our minor) where we didn't have like classes anymore, so we didn't have to go to Zernike every day. Like I really noticed that I was getting a lot more lazy and I was more tired, because before that I would cycle to Zernike every day, and even though that wasn't like a real exercise, it was still just moving and going outside and doing something instead of just sitting either at home or just cycling for like two minutes to UB, you know, so. Yeah. → Multifunctionality

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 18:21

And what about one thing about cycling that's a lot better than taking public transport In your opinion?

**Interviewee** 18:31

Freedom of arriving at the time you want and also departing when you want. The freedom of time of departure and arrival.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 18:43

Coming back to the question where I asked if you think you will continue cycling when you leave Groningen, do you think you will also continue cycling in later age when you're older? Maybe you have a family...to commute?

**Interviewee** 19:04

I think it really depends on the situation there. If I would have family and children and stuff like that, I would of course, teach my children how to cycle because I just think it's a nice thing to know. Like, if I would stay in Netherlands for example, then I might get one of these BakFiets for example, where you can put your kids in instead of taking the car because I think then you're more concerned about the exercise and the air and stuff like that, instead of just sitting in the car, and of course, is cheap, you know? Yeah, I think it also depends on like, my economic situation. A lot of time, it's really cheap to cycle instead of doing anything else, so, okay.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 19:51

And if you can describe a perfect bike ride to uni, what would it entail?

**Interviewee** 20:04

Warm weather with sunshine and not a lot of people. And I think I would enjoy it more if I take the route that's by the canal then if I took the route that is like through just like the neighbourhoods and stuff, so I think the ideal ride would just be like when I don't have to hurry but I still connect the fastest because I want to know, some old time stress and not a lot of people and just like yeah, nice road check on as well.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 20:44

And what is your favourite part about cycling to uni? Like what do you look forward the most about cycling to uni?

**Interviewee** 20:52

I think just like starting off my day, you know, like getting your body going basically. Because that's like what I enjoy talking to most in the morning life. It makes like going to uni less annoying that I'm like afraid I'm just going to go to uni and sit in class and just fall asleep there, you know, because I'm really tired when I get out of bed and then I maybe have some breakfast and sometimes take a shower now, but then I go outside on the cycle and it's like a real wake up, you know, and then when you're at uni, you're like, Okay, and my body is like, stuck booted up for the day, you know, and I'm ready to whatever, you know.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 21:32

Perfect. We have come to the end of the interview. I have no more questions to ask. Is there anything you would like to add about cycling and it being enjoyable?

**Interviewee** 21:47

I think I think we covered most of it.

**Greta Jeruseviciute** 21:50

Ok, well, thank you very much. Have a good day.

**Interviewee** 21:55

You're welcome.

*Interviewee #10: Cycling enthusiast*

**Hi, thank you for agreeing to participate in my interview. Today I'm going ask you about your cycling experience. And I just want to get to know as much of your opinions about cycling as possible. This will be more like a conversation between us. So, feel free to express whatever you want. This interview will be recorded. Is that okay?**

Yes.

**Okay, let's, let's begin. So just to make sure this is correct. Do you cycle on a daily basis?**

Normally, yes. Now not so much but yeah.

**Now give it now given the coronavirus circumstances it's a bit different. Do you enjoy it?**

Yes, very much.

**Okay, great. So firstly, I just want to know for what purpose do you normally use your bike?**

Mainly to go to University or to go shopping, so as my daily mean of commute and from getting from A to B. But then I also cycle as a sport on my racing bike. So then it's for going outside the city but just for sport purposes.

**So, both for both for commuting and as a hobby?**

Yes.

**And how come you don't use a car or like another mode of transport to commute on a daily?**

I mean I have like, reasons for not using a car mainly due to **environmental** reasons. And then also money reasons just I mean, it makes no sense for me to get a car here. And then also because it's just **the most convenient mode** of transport in the city, like I've never taken the bus and in my life here, so I don't know I don't even know where I have to go where the next bus station is because Cycling is just **the easiest way of getting around**.

**Okay and where do you normally use your bike? So, would you say you use it just in Groningen or do you use it back home? Like when you go on holiday?**

No, my bike is already since I go to primary school I always go by bike to school and I try when I travel to other places, I try to always like rent a bike or something. Because you can explore the city much better in my opinion. So, Groningen is for me, obviously a bike place but it's only one of many bike places. I cycle everywhere.

**You said that when you go on holiday, you will always try to run out of bike. What aspects, or like what factors would prevent you from renting a bike or using a bike somewhere?**

Probably my interest in a way so you know, if I go to a, to a place where I know I will spend a lot of time in shopping places and stuff and I'm just going to be there for a couple of days or two days or something, then I wouldn't rent a bike. But if I know that I'm at a place where which is big and which is spacious, and, and I know I'll be a little bit longer I think I would always try to get a bike to see different parts of the place to see different parts of the city. But then also for me, it's I often use my bike as a mode of transport in my travelling, so I travel by bike.

**To get from A to B?**

Yeah.

**You mentioned this before, but you also cycle in your home country?**

Yes.

**Why do you choose to cycle there Instead of taking the car? Would you say it's like a cultural thing like everyone's cycles there? Is more like your own family. The infrastructure?**

I think it was, it was very, my family was very much of like, they wanted they wanted me to know how to cycle as soon as possible, especially my grandma. So with my grandma and my sister, we always went on cycling holidays when I was younger, not cycling holidays, but we went on holidays and three of us and we would always take our bikes and, and then and then relatively soon I started going to school by bike, so this is how it came to my natural like, I wasn't even thinking of taking the

car or something. And then when I had the chance to go by car, it was often that my parents were using their car. And I just enjoyed having my bike. And to the extent that now when I go back to Berlin, I have the feeling that I can save a lot of money over, for example, public transport, when while going by bike, and again, in my opinion bikes are just the best way of travelling inside cities, whereas cars are definitely the worst mode of transport inside cities to get around for me. So, I think it's just much more convenient. It's cheaper, and you do a much better contribution to the environment.

**Convenient, cheaper and better for the environment. Would you say those are the aspects of riding a bike that you enjoy the most?**

It's just, like, I love to cycle. You know, it's, I know some people like to do whatever... I don't know. And I just love to cycle.

**Would you then consider yourself as a cyclist?**

Yes.

**Is that how you would identify yourself?**

Yes, but no. Because I think it's for me it's a mode of transport in the place I'm living in. But then it's more than just mode of travelling, (multifunctionality) you know, I travel over weeks on my bike. And, and then it's just also an ideology (identity) in a way. I think being a cyclist can also be some sort of an ideology.

**Are there any aspects of cycling that you like the least, or you just don't enjoy as much?**

Flat tires. I think many people are now going to say like our bike infrastructure and stuff. That's not that much of a of an issue actually, to me, obviously, it's nice to have cycling lanes, but I also enjoy cycling in the in the normal Street. What I sometimes struggle with, is that some people just not here not in the Netherlands, but at other places. They're just not aware of cyclists, like they don't know how cyclists thinks and how vulnerable he is sometimes. And so that's for me even sometimes more important than the infrastructure. So, just a little bit aware of, you know, that there are cyclists and they're part of the of the traffic flow as like a transit transportation thingy, then I think that would already prevent a lot of a lot of accidents. → Cyclist awareness more important than infrastructure; viewing cyclists as a serious transport mode

**So, it's having a supportive bicycle culture or bicycle awareness, right?**

Yeah. And I feel this for example, here in the Netherlands, it's completely different to Germany or to Berlin at least, where it's like, well, first of all, it's cars. And then it's cyclists.

**Have you experienced any accidents while cycling? And my question that I'm asking this question is because I want to know if the accidents have impacted your opinion, or enjoyment of cycling?**

Yeah, I've had like a few little accidents, but I've never had to car accident on a bike. No, there was nothing where I was like 'now I'm afraid of cycling'.

**Okay, so safety is not an issue in your cycling enjoyment.**

No.

**And what about like the fitness aspect of cycling? The physical side. Is that something that particularly appeals to you?**

Yes, for sure. It's less the fitness aspect because for this I'm going to use you know, my racing bike to sports. But for me, it's like getting out of the house, going on my bike and cycle, then go into uni like have this, I don't know, 10 minutes of fresh air and of movement in the mornings. But also to, you know, when you cycle back from the library or from somewhere that you have this like a barrier

between your house and your home and the outside world in a way and like the cycling connected in a way and that *I really, really enjoy*. And when there wasn't there was something more that I wanted to say fitness...I forgot. → mild exercise, fresh air (sensory), relaxing (affective appraisal)

**It's okay.**

Yeah, I definitely enjoy this like.... Yeah, and that's what I wanted to say, is that some people always say they want to live in the city centre because they're close to everything. And for me, it's actually I'll actually enjoy living a little bit outside, so I have these 10 minutes of cycling. That's what I want. → actually enjoys the commute itself; proof that commute mode is not chosen based on rational time minimising choice

**The 10 minutes used to cycle, do you use it for anything else like to think about, for example, your day? Is that why you love those 10 minutes?**

Yeah, for sure. I'm not one of these guys that like, listens to podcasts or something. Like, I don't know, it's more either. For myself, I am also really bad in cycling with other people. Like, for me, Cycling is on my own. And then you know, then I go through the traffic and I race some people in the end, it's just for myself. And like, I'm not thinking about anything. It's just like transitioning zone out of one situation into the other situation. And I feel this, for example, right now, where it's really missing, you know, like, a 10 minute cycle from the lecture hall to the UB is actually not that much. You know, it helps so much to break your day into pieces and you connected by a little cycle ride. → No socialising; me time; relaxing

**Okay, I just also interesting so for you the social aspect of cycling is not that important?**

Yeah, sometimes I enjoy both like I enjoy taking on my own, but I can also enjoy connecting with people and having a chat and doing all of these steps that I said before together, like I enjoy both. → flexibility

**Will you continue cycling? Like as a commute when you leave Groningen?**

Yes, for sure, if it's if it's possible, always.

**What would make it impossible to cycle?**

I think if my daily commute would exceed, like 45 minutes or an hour, if I would have to cycle more than an hour, I wouldn't cycle then I would find other ways, I think, but up to an hour, I would cycle every day.

**So commuting distance is like the biggest one, it doesn't matter if place would be hilly or heavily congested with traffic or if there would be like a lack of cycling lanes?**

No, no, it has to make sense. You know, it's like, it has to make sense in my day to day life. If I have the feeling that I spend way too much time on my commute then it's not then it's not a suitable mode anymore. But if I feel like you know, I'm I can do all of this with a bike then it's then it's the best mode of transport.

**It's very interesting from this interview, I kind of gathered that for you. Like, what makes me What makes cycling, super enjoyable is a lot more intrinsic. And, you know, it's not based on for example, like the city's infrastructure or how good the cycling paths are or whether the culture is there. For you, it's like you enjoy cycling just for what it is.**

Yes, yeah. Yeah. It's not that much determined by my surroundings. It's more like I do it and I do it everywhere and I'd make it work somehow. No matter where I am.

**Thank you for this interview. We've come to an end. Is there anything else you'd like to add about cycling?**

I think it's a really important point for mental health because I have enough time to think but also the light physical movement. Like I honestly think that many people do good if they cycle. For me at least

it's such an important good break in the day where I can rest for a couple of minutes. I think it helps me a lot. → Mental health benefits from mild exercise + relaxing (affective)

